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Dirty Wars in Central America

Poland's Church • Hail Balanchine • Young Man Churchill

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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REAGAN'S SECRET LIBERAL PAST

By William E. Leuchtenburg

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23, 1947 (UP)—Screen star Ronald Reagan, a leader of Americans for Democratic Action, told House Un-American Activities probers today that fear of Communism cannot justify "compromise with any of our democratic principles."

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CORRESPONDENCE

PUBLIC FAITH

To the editors:

Three recent TNR articles ("False Gandhi," March 31; "Pulpit Politics," March 14; and "Reverend Reagan," April 4) have expressed discomfort with the appearance of religious faith in public affairs. The argument seemed to go like this: public affairs have an important moral component; so does religion. But religions are fundamentally limited by peculiarites deriving from "revelation," which particularizes their moral outlook, making them unsuitable for public debate. Further, religions' otherworldly outlook makes them naive with regard to secular affairs—and therefore dangerous in their moral zealousness. Virtue is essentially a secular matter, and the religious community should stay to itself except insofar as its outlook accords with the secular morality.

I find this point of view remarkable and profoundly naive. For the overwhelming majority of the human race, morality is, and always has been, grounded in religion. Secular morality is by far the exception. And isn't it possible that much of secular morality is, in fact, a rationalization of the prevailing religious culture? For example, the high premium we Westerners put on individual rights and freedoms may well be a prejudice derived from our Christian origins.

Certain contemporary public issues have challenged the public moral consensus.We are being pushed back to our moral roots; and those roots are now more exposed. It would be more enlightening for TNR to try to explore those roots and the processes by which moral consensus can be achieved.

ARLIN T. LARSON
Monroe Center, Illinois

HIGH-TECH HEALTH

To the editors:

In Paul Starr's article on health care costs ("The Laissez-Faire Elixir," TNR, April 18), the author seems to place the primary blame for escalating medical costs on bad decisions by government. He also seems to feel that the only solution is better governmental decisions and action. Two entirely different factors appear to be at the root of this very serious and worsening situation.

First, there is the problem of doctors' fees. With the possible exception of corporate executives, doctors are almost certainly the most overpaid people in our society. This is accepted because many feel those in the medical profession are responsible for increasing life expectancy and better health. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Those responsible are the people like me—scientists, engineers, and technicians—who have made possible public works that provide abundant pure water, sewage disposal, and other sanitary services. Efficient machinery and refrigeration provide the healthiest diet ever known to man. Machines save most of us from the backbreaking labor that once destroyed our bodies.

When we do fall ill, doctors must rely on the medicines and machinery that have been provided to them by science and technology. We should look at doctors not as workers of wonders, but as the highly skilled technicians they really are. Because of their training, they probably deserve double the wage of other skilled mechanics, not ten times that amount, which they charge. Not only doctors' fees, but technology itself is at the root of the explosion in medical costs.

S. TED ISAACS
Cincinnati, Ohio

A DIFFERENT DRUMMER

To the editors:

Having just finished reading *The Little Drummer Girl* by John LeCarré, I began reading the review by David Pryce-Jones with interest, wondering what "falsifications" promised on the cover of TNR he would disclose (TNR, April 18). Instead of disclosures, I found an interpretation so simplistic even Ronald Reagan would dismiss it.

To Pryce-Jones, LeCarré's Palestinians are good, his Israelis evil: Palestinians are motivated by love, Israelis by hate. The drummer girl herself is a "young fringe actress with generous and innocent left-wing instincts." Her "willing submission" to the Israelis is "an implausibility so enormous . . . that the story collapses. . . ."

Why this reading? Presumably because the Palestinians *claim* to be good; the Israelis, more worldly, don't. Michel, Khalil, Tayeh "kill only for love." This they assert so often that Pryce-Jones believes that LeCarré believes it. Is Pryce-Jones unacquainted with irony? Is *Huckleberry Finn* really the racist tract that limpwits take it to be?

Charlie, the drummer girl, far from being "generous and innocent," is an amateur whore, kicked out of boarding school for promiscuity, thus hastening the death of her long-suffering father. Her "willing submission" to Israeli intelligence is quite as believable as her earlier willing submission to a brutish lover who beat and humiliated her.

True, Charlie, like all the characters, is a human being, and we learn to accept her and to love her, as we learn that the Palestinian terrorists, too, are human and indeed generous and loving among themselves.

Beyond the circle of TNR's editorial office there are "generous and loving" people who are dismayed by Israel today without hating any less Palestinian terrorism or pitying any less Palestinian refugees. Many of these loving, dismayed, and pitying people are Israelis.

I have never observed such blind prejudice as this review displays. Or is Pryce-Jones an ironist too deep and subtle for me?

HARRIET KILLORIN
Tybee Island, Georgia

DANCE THOUGHTS

To the editors:

I very much enjoyed Eva Resnikova's article on the programs of the Dance Theater of Harlem ("Modern Romance," TNR, April 11). Very often dance critics merely describe a performance. It was a welcome change to read someone who has ideas about dance and can present them clearly and in an interesting way. Dance is an art form that deserves more intellectual respectability than it has received, and articles like this one help create the framework for serious discussion. I hope you will have more articles by Ms. Resnikova in the future.

ROBERT GULIN
New York, New York

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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COVER Ronald Reagan testifies at a HUAC hearing in Washington, D.C., November 1947. United Press International photograph. Article on page 18.

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

THE MOTHER'S MILK

I have never met Knute Dobkins, but he is one of my favorite "former" people. Dobkins is the former Marion County Democratic chairman in Indianapolis, Indiana, a job which pays $6,000 a year. Understandably, Dobkins considered that amount inadequate for the appetites of a full-time politician, so he appointed himself commissioner of Voter Registration, which carries an "income supplement" of $20,000. Here is no Common Cause goo-goo, but a man who truly understands the natural juxtaposition of politics and money.

It's just too bad for Knute Dobkins's heirs that his name is not John Sweezy. Sweezy, the Marion County Republican chairman (present, not former), also appointed himself to a paying job, head of the state license plate branch offices in Indiana's largest county. In Indiana, the party that controls the governor's office controls the license plate franchises. That is the law. Something in the vicinity of $12 million a year passes through John Sweezy's branch offices, and out of that he grabs a salary well into six figures. Sweezy kicks some of it back to the Indiana Republican Party, of course, as does every clerk who works in every license plate branch statewide. That is the way business is done in Indiana. It is an arrangement that periodically attracts the attention of a grand jury.

If the Democrats ever again take over the governorship of Indiana, Sweezy's perks would normally pass to Knute Dobkins—only poor Dobkins got himself defeated for re-election last fall. Accustomed to the public trough, he promptly filed for $113 a week unemployment. He says he has been watching the want ads. So far, no openings for a county chairman or a voter registrar.

Another "former," former Chicago Alderman Louis Farina, is to be the guest of honor at an upcoming cocktail party. Farina did not run for re-election owing to charges pending against him in the U.S. District Court. The charges say that he shook down real estate speculators who wanted permits to convert apartment buildings into condos. Loyal city hall payrollers recently received invitations on behalf of "our mutual friend"—Farina—"who has pleaded his innocence to these charges but it is necessary for him to defend himself and the legal cost of defending himself is very expensive." A $50 minimum contribution is suggested.

Farina operates in a highly competitive environment as concerns politics and money. Former Mayor Jane Byrne would attest to this. Byrne sponsored events at which anyone who wanted to do business with the city—contractors, architects, consultants, developers, lawyers—came by for a drink and dropped off an envelope. Technically, these were cocktail parties; Chicago politicians call them "drops." Byrne used some of the $10-$12 million raised in that fashion for her campaign. The rest she will pay taxes on and live off until she finds a job.

Big-city mayors are in a position to keep contributors interested. Former Mayor Frank Rizzo, who is running again in Philadelphia, says, "A man who has been out of office for three years who can pick up a telephone and call some of his friends, friends in the business community, and get the kind of money we have gotten already—that shows they believe in me. They know I am going to win or they wouldn't invest their money." Well put, Frank.

Boston Mayor Kevin White says he hasn't yet decided whether to run for re-election, but he already has a kitty of $344,000 stashed away, most of it from people whose businesses depend on city hall for items like contracts and permits. Boston is a trickle-down political town. There is the story of a licensing commissioner so dedicated to his job that he made on-site inspections at taverns. Wearing one rubber glove, the commissioner would stroll behind the bar and dip his hands into the rinse

continued on page 40

Making America competitive.

Three leading analysts affiliated with the Harvard Business School argue that the current crisis in American industry results less from external factors, like energy costs, than from the failure of American managers to adjust to the realities of today's global markets. In a new book that has already stirred controversy, they explain how the very nature of competition has changed, what demands these changes place on management, and what promises they hold out for the future.

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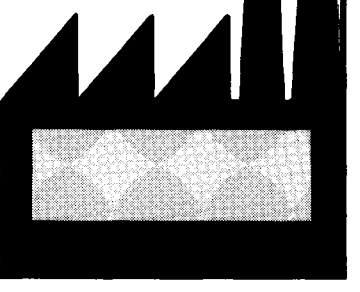

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 23, 1983

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN WARS

Dodging the difficult questions has become the primary procedure of the debate about Central America that now consumes the capital. It is what President Reagan's speech and Senator Dodd's response have in common. The dodging is not artful. The President stresses a military response to the situation, but displays a dim understanding of its social and economic origins. The Senator stresses a social and economic response to the situation, but does not seem to know that it includes a war. The reason for the dodging is the same. Our policymakers on both sides of the aisle live in fear of history, and of the American voter. They do not want to be remembered by their responsibility for "losing" Central America. "Who among us would wish to bear responsibility for failing to meet our shared obligation?" the President pointedly asked the Congress. "The President cannot blame the Congress," Senator Dodd replied. This is not bipartisanship, which both parties protest they want. It is not even leadership. It is, rather, a kind of polling of posterity, and a confusion of the American public. And it accounts, too, for the demagoguery in the debate. The President warned of the consequences of our Central American policy for the coherence of NATO (poor NATO, there is not a problem on the planet that does not threaten its coherence) and observed that the military aid he requests is "less than one-tenth of what Americans will spend this year on coin-operated video-games." Senator Dodd thundered that " 'the dogs of war' " will soon be "loose in Central America," and observed that we are "paying $140,000 in hard-earned tax dollars for each one of those guerrillas we are trying to defeat." Maybe Atari could design a better Salvadoran war. Maybe each of those guerrillas would take just half the money and run.

Washington, in short, is fogged by fatalism about the prospects for American action in Central America. Senator Dodd speaks of our need "to move with the tide of history rather than stand against it." Administration officials confess to "Darwinian" speculations about the fitness of democracy for survival. It is all very intellectual, which this city rarely is; but it is also all very beside the point. The Soviets are no more privy to providence than we. Their system is slowly stumbling, though not so slowly that we can sit back and watch. There *is* a plan for American action in Central America that can work. It is a more honest and tough-minded version of the plan that the President set out in his speech. If the foreign policy process remains rigged by partisan politics, however, and by an attachment to ideological simplifications, the fatalism in Washington will fulfill itself.

Sometimes liberals have given complexity a bad name; their sermons against the terrible simplifiers of the right and of the left have sometimes signified no more than a failure to decide or a fear to act. But the most fundamental truth about Central America is that it is not a single and simple problem. It is the geographical expression, rather, for a multiplicity of miserable conditions, all of which must be addressed if their society and our security are to be satisfied. There will be no instant gratification in this region.

This the President appears to have understood. He announced a four-point plan for American policy in Central America. First, "we will support democracy, human rights, and freedom." Second, "we will support economic development." Third, "we will support the security of the region's threatened nations." Fourth, "we will support dialogue and negotiations." It's sketchy, but it looks good on paper. And it does not deserve the rather lurid light that Senator Dodd cast upon it when he charged that the President has abandoned consideration of the social and economic wretchedness of Central American life for "ever-increasing military assistance . . . that only leads to a dark tunnel of endless intervention." Military aid is hardly all that the President proposed; it is quite likely, in fact, that there are planners in the Pentagon for whom the President's proposal was too soft, too conscious of the extramilitary obligations of American policy.

Still, we are skeptical. There was a disturbing disparity between the soundness of Mr. Reagan's prescriptions for the region and the unsoundness of his descriptions of it. At this late date in the discussion, the President still does not acknowledge the full actuality of El Salvador—the

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everyday corpse-finding life of the place. And there is simply no basis in reality for his happy report on land reform. Has the President contemplated the real political requirement of the social and economic aid he proposes? For Salvadoran society will not be relieved of its ills if the Caribbean Basin Initiative is just another opportunity for corruption in high places. Has he contemplated the real political requirement of the military aid he proposes? For the war against the Salvadoran guerrillas will not be won if the arms we send are used to police Salvadoran peasants. The real political requirement of his policy, of any right and realistic American policy, is the final surrender of the Salvadoran security forces, and of the odious oligarchical interests they serve, in the interest of the democratic development of the country. This must happen first, not last. Until it does, we will, with all our good intentions, be fooling ourselves. We will not be bringing freedom to El Salvador, or keeping the Soviets out; we will only be lining pockets, and loading executioners' guns.

Against the President's analysis, which repeated his view that the disorder in Central America is the result of Soviet "adventurism," Senator Dodd produced another analysis, which has appeared in these pages before. "If Central America were not racked with poverty, there would be no revolution . . . there would be nothing for the Soviets to exploit." We agree. (So does the State Department. "Deeply rooted political and economic problems," its *Briefing Book on Central America* begins, "are being exploited by an armed and radicalized left. . . .") The social and economic repair of the region is indeed a profoundly anti-Soviet idea. The President cited Harry Truman, and Ambassador Kirkpatrick has cited the Marshall Plan, and the analogy is apt. But Senator Dodd, too, leaves us skeptical. While it is true that the Soviets are not the reason for revolution, it is also true that the Soviets are there. Despite his assertion that "we will oppose the establishment of Marxist states in Central America," the Senator's analysis is filled with concern for Salvadoran society and almost empty of concern for American security. There is a military dimension to the Salvadoran crisis—there is, in brief, a war—and this requires a military response. The military response that the President requested is not very considerable; the persistence of the Salvadoran guerrillas, their ability to paralyze the political process and cripple the economy, seem to warrant the additional investment of $110 million. Senator Dodd knows that is a small sum. There are good ideas in his head, then, but his head is a little in the sand. The Salvadoran guerrillas are the sworn enemies of the reconstruction the Senator wants. They are scorching their own earth. If you are against the establishment of a Leninist state in El Salvador, and against the perpetuation of its population's misery, you must be for the defeat of the guerrillas, too.

The etiology of revolution advanced by Senator Dodd is correct, but it is also reflected in the proportions of current American aid to the area. Two-thirds of the money we send to El Salvador is pledged precisely to social and economic tasks. No doubt a good deal of it is intercepted by the political structure of the place; but, then, as we said, the social and economic reconstruction of El Salvador cannot be accomplished without the elimination of its political indecencies. Still, the President should take the Democrats up on their word, and the Democrats should take him up on his. Military assistance should be modest, though not too modest to produce results in the field, and it should not be unconditional. The supervision of all of Salvadoran politics by the army should be stopped; the land reform program, for example, should be kept out of its reach. And social and economic assistance should swell. The Caribbean Basin Initiative should indeed be made into a Marshall Plan. The difference between postwar Europe and present-day Central America, between industrial democratic nations and agricultural autocratic nations, means only that this plan will be differently designed, and in some respects more difficult to carry out. But the idea is good. It will require, however, a lot of money. Will Congress put out? Or will American foreign policy be caught between the North-South analysis and the budget?

"SMALL tyrants, threatened by big, / Sincerely believe / they love Liberty." The United States is not exactly a big tyrant, and Auden is not exactly a profound observer of politics, but this verse explains something about the sympathy that the United States has recently won for the Sandinistas.

The Reagan Administration's policy on Nicaragua has been a shabby affair. It has consisted in rhetoric, and in the overt conduct of covert operations. The rhetoric has some basis in reality; there is no point in pretending that the Sandinistas are democrats, or that they have not become an instrument of Soviet intrigue. The operations across the Honduran border—intended to "harass" the Nicaraguan regime, the Administration says, not to overthrow it—have backfired, and produced in Congress a kind of localized isolationism. More importantly, it has resulted in a great symbolic setback for the United States. Many Latin Americans have been reminded of their fear that the United States remains the infernal imperialism to the north. This fear has filled the political culture of Latin America for most of a century; it is not easily dispelled, though the Reagan Administration has shown that it is easily recalled. It is time that this Administration understood that peoples remember. It is precisely the memory of peoples—the memory of Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, and Guatemalans of American policy in the '20s and '30s—that has put the United States at a historical disadvantage in its own hemisphere. The history of the Caribbean does not begin, as it appears to begin for our policymakers, with the fall of Batista. Decades of economic exploitation and political paternalism have made whole nations suspicious of us. We are, to a large extent, reaping what we sowed. We must, therefore, sow this way no more. Moral and material considerations aside, there is at least this reason for letting the Nicaraguans free and fetter and free themselves—that we require the good will of the populations that are pertinent

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to our security. If we overthrow the Sandinistas, we will exchange the hostility of a junta for the hostility of a continent.

Unfortunately, however, the Sandinistas make it impossible simply to live and let live. That is because it is they who do not let live. The foreign policy of the regime in Managua—its enthusiasm for the export of its own system of power, its service to the Soviet Union (its defense minister refused to rule out the acceptance of Soviet missiles), its supply of guns to the Salvadoran guerrillas—adds a geopolitical coloration to the Nicaraguan revolution. It makes it our business.

Which is not to say that the United States has been presented with a new opportunity for anti-Communist irrationality. It is important that we understand the nature of the danger, so that we carefully conceive the nature of our response. The Nicaraguan Army is not quite the offensive force that the Administration has described, and there is no air force. Nor, indeed, is the present Nicaraguan government, as the State Department's *Briefing Book* candidly notes, "completely consolidated." While it is almost certainly too late for the United States to fulfill its fondest hopes for Nicaragua, it is not too late for it to fulfill its worst fears. We may still have some influence on the Sandinista satrapy, all of which may not wish to risk the wrath of the United States or the wrath of their own people. It may still be possible to salvage from the Nicaraguan situation a more or less closed society that does not do the dirty work of the Soviet Union, and let the freedom fighters of Nicaragua make their fight.

The American message to Managua, then, must be this: suffer your own struggles, but stay out of the others. This appeared to be the message that the President wished to communicate in his speech. "We do not seek its overthrow," he said of the Sandinista regime. "Our interest is to ensure that it does not infect its neighbors through the export of subversion or violence." And he went on: "We should not—and we will not—protect the Nicaraguan government from the anger of its own people." It is indeed difficult to understand why Lech Walesa should have American sympathy but Eden Pastora should not. "But we should, through diplomacy, offer an alternative." Needless to say, a secret war, even if it is public, is not diplomacy. It should be promptly ended. In its place the United States should support, as the President said we would, the regional agreements that Mexico and Venezuela have been pursuing—agreements on the withdrawal of all foreign troops and military personnel, and on the renunciation of support for somebody else's guerrillas.

The President's proposals, then, have merit; but the public must hold him to them all. If our military aid to El Salvador is not accompanied by social and economic progress; if the war against the Salvadoran guerrillas is not accompanied by the reform of Salvadoran politics; if diplomatic firmness toward Nicaragua is not accompanied by the effort for regional coexistence; if the effort for regional coexistence is not accompanied by the end of the secret war; if the democrats fighting the dictators in Nicaragua do not move the United States as much as the democrats fighting the army and the guerrillas in El Salvador—we may indeed "lose" Central America. But it is not "lost" yet. The President warns of "the destabilization of an entire region." A good deal of that region, however, is already destabilized. This President and this Congress have the chance to correct America's incompetence before social instability. That would be the highest form of competence before communism.

George Balanchine, 1904-1983

"It is not easy to write for legs," observed Theophile Gautier in 1839, when the ballet was young. It is older now; and last week it aged quickly, with the ache of George Balanchine's death. Balanchine was our greatest writer for legs, and for arms, and for heads, and for hearts. He changed the history of classical dance, and of modern culture. He changed, too, the history of every individual who looked closely at what he created. Balanchine made possible for his time what his time seemed bent on making impossible—a pure experience of the full powers of art.

Music may be man's most beautiful organization of time. Ballet may be his most beautiful organization of movement. Balanchine joined them as they had not been joined before. A great deal has been written about his many works—about their musicality, about their severe devotion to "the dance element," above all, about their transformation of the tradition to which they always tenderly refer. In all these works, however, the visible served the invisible. "Ballet is unnatural," Balanchine said, in a characteristically modest statement of an immodest metaphysical ambition. In his hands, ballet was preternatural; out of the corporeal condition of life he made a realm of ideality, a silent world of spiritual decorum that was not disrupted by desire, or even by death. He created a company of dancers, an order of "boys" and "girls" trained in the ballet's newly discovered techniques for transcendence, and night after night they lift the clay into the clouds.

Balanchine's biography was the biography of twentieth-century ballet. He was trained in the Imperial Ballet in St. Petersburg, in the great style of Petipa. He heard Lenin address the crowd from the balcony of the Imperial Ballet's prima ballerina, and Trotsky address a Party meeting at the Maryinsky Theater as the dancers entertained the commissars. He left Russia in 1924, and Diaghilev chose him to replace Nijinska as the choreographer of the Ballets Russes. He was twenty. Four years later he made *Apollo*, "the crucial turning point in my artistic life," and began the association with Stravinsky that ranks as one of the greatest artistic collaborations of all time. Diaghilev's death left Balan-

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chine looking for opportunity, and in 1933 Lincoln Kirstein brought the unmoored master to America—"the land of lovely bodies," he called it. A year later the School of American Ballet was founded, with the aim of establishing the classical dance in the United States. In 1948 the New York City Ballet was founded, with the aim of providing Balanchine with all the material conditions that his imagination would require. Its fertility was astounding. He made his own repertory.

Balanchine was what used to be called a universal genius. The most striking thing about the Balanchine repertory is its range. There is not a corner of the soul that it fails to explore. Love, naturally; sometimes briefly, as in the heartbroken *Meditation*, sometimes in the fullness of its rising and falling, as in *Serenade*. Lust, too, in *Tzigane*, and in *Rubies*. Pride, as Frank O'Hara correctly observed, in *Agon*. Reverence, not least for Terpsichore, in *Mozartiana*. Joy, in *Symphony in C*. Power, in *Kammermusik No. 2*, which is a kind of analysis of fascism in dance. Destiny, in *The Four Temperaments*, Balanchine's most philosophical work. Balanchine spoke rapturously of his idealization of woman, and his ballets show it; but he had a voluptuary's knowledge of endings. His repertory contains many variations on the theme of loss. Yet he was not bitter; he was wise. The love of woman was never far from the love of fate.

The rising curtain at the New York State Theater—just the thought of its rising—dispels the sorrow. Balanchine remains a fact of our life, one of its finest facts. He leaves in his wake pleasures for our eyes, forms for our minds, strengths for our spirits.

NOTEBOOK

□ HE CHANGED HIS MIND, yes; but Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper seems still to have made an ass of himself in certifying that the Hitler "diaries" are genuine. There is a sense, alas, in which Lord Dacre has had this coming to him. He is a very fine historian. When he works in his own field, he is scrupulous in his use of documents. But ever since this young intelligence officer in the British Army was given the task of discovering if Hitler had really died in the bunker, and put his findings into his brilliant and still unchallenged *The Last Days of Hitler*, he has had an itch to dabble in contemporary mysteries. He has been a persistent questioner of the Warren Report, thus lending his name to the conspiracy craze about Kennedy's assassination. His wonderful book, *The Hermit of Peking*—an historical "whodunit" about an eccentric Englishman in China—thrills with the secret messages and encounters (even at airports!) by which the original documents were conveyed to him. There is something in the cloak-and-dagger world which fascinates him. He himself is not a novice at conspiracy. He arranged the election of Harold Macmillan as chancellor of Oxford University; Prime Minister Macmillan repaid his services by appointing Trevor-Roper the Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford. Sir Hugh's unrelenting Protestant exposures of what he sees as the age-long conspiracies of the Roman Catholic Church are also sustained with an Elizabethan vigor; in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—his best field as a historian—there was a lot of cloak-and-dagger melodrama. When he steps into the contemporary world, however, he is, with all the authority of his reputation, like an untrained investigative reporter. The Hitler hoax (it must be a hoax if David Irving says it is not) has not damaged Trevor-Roper's authority as a historian, but it has damaged his celebrity as a cub reporter. A cobbler should, as the proverb wisely says, stick to his last.

□ DOWNERS GROVE was the name of the town where Muddy Waters died last week, and it fit. He was the author, after all, of some of the bleakest nonfiction in American music. In fact, it was the full chronicle of a twentieth-century black man's pains. It began on the plantation, where he sang a raw country blues—he was first recorded by a folklorist looking for Robert Johnson, a bluesman whose despair was really dangerous—and came to the ghetto, where he plugged his guitar into some socket in the South Side of Chicago and created the urban blues. In Chicago he assembled probably the most fecund band in the history of the blues. Jimmy Rogers on guitar, Little Walter on harmonica, and Otis Spann on piano. Spann was Waters's half-brother, and the most poetic pianist that the blues produced. This South Side sound had a special quality—close and cramped, febrile, a bit hopeless and a bit furious. It was the sound of large complaints in little rooms. Those who discovered it a decade later in rock 'n' roll, who came to Muddy Waters through the many bad white boys he influenced, flattered themselves that it put their struggle, too, into music; and Waters certainly courted this crowd. But the blues he performed so plangently in public were, finally, private. In his recordings of the '40s in particular there are accents of anguish that are not exactly entertaining. But even in the rather unspirited sessions of his later years, when the black audience no longer looked to his music, there remained the traces of time-honored trials. Muddy Waters always ran deep.

□ POLITICS AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: "The enormous life-and-death power of the nuclear oligarchs," writes *The Nation*'s editorialist in its April 16 issue, "has rendered obsolete much of the logic and practice of traditional democratic institutions. . . . The broad European campaign has become a metademocratic means to wrest control of the politics of survival." Some might argue that "traditional democratic institutions"—that is, democratic institutions—are not something to "wrest control" from. Still, "metademocracy" is a coinage that deserves recognition. It may be broadly defined as the circumvention of the most remarkable political institutions in the world by mobs and little magazines. It is still a bit squeamish, however, as it retains for its contempt for democracy the moral

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cachet of democracy itself. Presumably the lexicographer knows a way to return from metademocracy to mere democracy once the movement's aims are met.

□ WE'RE DELIGHTED to announce that Michael Kinsley is leaving the editorship of *Harper's* to return to THE NEW REPUBLIC. He will become—listen carefully, please, because the column is supposed to be anonymous and we're only going to say this once—the new TRB. Mr. Kinsley will be here in the autumn, after an extended fact-finding tour of selected beaches in sunny parts of the world. *Harper's*, during the eighteen months of his editorship, went from gloom and decline to the point where it won this year's National Magazine Award for general excellence. Come fall, his general excellence will be all ours.

□ A PHRASE inadvertently dropped from Martin Peretz's "False Distinction" in last week's TNR obscured the meaning of one sentence. The sentence should have read, "The jurors had passed on to the Pulitzer Board a third nominee, Rod Nordland of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, for his coverage of war and famine in East Asia, but the board chose Jenkins instead."

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "President Roosevelt's address to the peoples of the world urging disarmament and non-aggression is important, not for its content, but as a carefully timed, dramatic gesture of warning. One could contend logically that it is impossible to distinguish offensive from defensive armament, or that industrial capacity to create instruments of war is of far greater importance than the actual possession of these instruments at any one time. One could also point out that a new non-aggression pact would not be of much use when the nations have already agreed to others, which have been violated with impunity. Nevertheless, the important thing is the intention behind the formulas. Almost any formula is good so long as it is universally accepted and actually leads in the direction of less preparation for war and less fear of it." ("The Week," May 24, 1933).

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

INTEROFFICE INTERFERENCE

AT THE 8 A.M. White House staff meeting on the day after President Reagan's Central America speech to Congress, National Security Adviser William P. Clark commended the process by which the speech had been put together, pronouncing it a model for future speeches. Despite some lingering doubts in the State Department and the White House that high-visibility Presidential involvement is the best tactic for winning support for Administration policy in Latin America, there does seem to have been an unusual degree of cooperation among rival centers of power in composing the speech. That cooperation signals a temporary remission in the continuing conflict between Administration "confrontationists" led by Clark, and "coalition-builders," led by White House Chief of Staff James Baker. After a nasty round of leak and counter-leak between the two sides, one White House aide said, "Everybody recognizes how dangerous internecine warfare can be around this place, so people are going out of their way to be sensitive to the views of the others. There is tension beneath the surface, but the surface is placid right now."

Close cooperation on the Central America speech was possible partly because the subject matter is special. Clark brings to it his visceral, Reaganite anti-Communism, and Baker, a rich Texan's fear that instability in Central America and Mexico will send thousands of Latin refugees teeming into his home state. On other issues, however, conflicts continue over ideology and tactics, so that a new round of finger-pointing can be expected in the newspapers at any moment. President Reagan has been known to tell subordinates to stop their semipublic squabbling, but he is unlikely to resolve Clark-Baker differences by getting rid of either of them. Reagan does not fire people unless—as in the case of 1980 campaign manager John Sears and Secretary of State Alexander Haig—their behavior is insulting and intolerable. What's more, Reagan needs both Clark and Baker. In a sense, Reagan is two different people, the conservative purist and the governing pragmatist, and Clark and Baker reflect those contrary personality traits.

THE CONFLICT between the two, though, has done damage to the Reagan Administration in terms of public relations, morale, and substance. The Central America speech was a successful combination of bipartisanship and challenge, but most of the time the President has veered wildly from the harsh moralist who delivered the Darth Vader "focus of evil" speech at Orlando, Florida, on March 8, to the cool negotiator who put the Euromissile ball back into the Soviet court at Los Angeles on March 31. One day the President is denouncing the Democrats for wanting to bring back 21 percent interest rates and "sky-is-the-limit" tax increases, and the next day he is joshing it up with Tip O'Neill as he signs the bipartisan Social Security compromise.

If the public is confused by conflicting rhetorical signals, it may be even more distressed by stories, seemingly planted by one White House aide to attack another, indicating that the Reagan Administration is populated primarily by incompetents (Clark, Defense Secretary Weinberger), or disloyal conspirators (Baker and Budget Director David Stockman).

Internecine leakery seemed to reach new depths during the weeks just before Reagan's people turned their attention constructively to the Central America speech. *Newsweek*, *Time*, and CBS News all carried stories attacking Clark, while Evans and Novak, John Lofton of *The Wash-*

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ington Times, and Lou Cannon of *The Washington Post* served as silos for missiles aimed at Baker. *Newsweek* quoted "one Clark colleague" as saying "He's in a job that's too big for him," and cited various unnamed Administration officials as saying Clark was heavily responsible (as indeed he was, with Weinberger) for the "first-class disaster" of the European pipeline sanctions and the Administration's failure to present a compromise defense budget proposal to the Senate. *Newsweek* had one quote from a "top-level White House aide" saying "There's an attitude of let him fall on his face. . . . We're heading for an explosion. . . . It's going to be all the rest of us against Clark." *Time*, in a considerably gentler story about Clark, had just one line from a White House aide, observing that Clark is "content-free." Lesley Stahl of CBS recounted Clark's shortcomings without citing any White House sources, although it was assumed she got her information from them because the White House is her beat.

ON THE OTHER SIDE, Evans and Novak took the Stahl critique as ammunition to fire back at Baker. "This time," they said, "Baker's 'pragmatists' have targeted Clark after failing to bring down Ed Meese," the President's counselor. Their column went on to quote unnamed "accusers" as saying that Baker & Co. "secretly planned to block any compromise with the Senate" on the defense budget, noting that "that accusation borders on a charge of sabotage." Cannon, Reagan's biographer and the leading chronicler of the Reagan court, led off a story recounting a White House meeting at which former Secretary of State Alexander Haig leaned over to Clark and Weinberger and said, "You see, my guerrilla is still here and he's alive and well." Cannon observed: "He was referring to White House Chief of Staff James A. Baker III, Haig's nemesis in his volatile year-and-a-half as Secretary of State, whom Haig had once labeled a 'guerrilla in the White house.' "

Haig tells people that it was Clark, and not he, who made the joke, and it just may be that Clark—possibly to wage preemptive warfare—is responsible for more current leakery than Baker. Because of his emergence as a key adviser to Reagan, Clark was due for a round of profiles, and indeed he has received them lately, not only from *Time* and *Newsweek* but also *The Boston Globe* and *Newsday*. When reporters began approaching Baker and his aides for interviews on Clark, Baker ordered his staff not to talk, apparently fearing that any damaging comments would be blamed on him. That order was lifted only when Clark called the White House communications office to ask for full cooperation on the profiles. Allies of Clark—if not Clark himself—have used the attacks on Clark to counterattack Baker and to accuse him of that nastiest of White House sins: leaking.

Beyond creating an atmosphere of tension and suspicion, the Clark-Baker conflict has done damage to Reagan's prospects of putting through a bipartisan budget package that will reduce deficits, keep interest rates down, and ensure steady economic recovery. The Baker side of the White House, including Congressional Liaison Chief Kenneth Duberstein and Budget Director Stockman, have urged conciliation with Congress in order to seek agreement on defense cuts, out-year tax increases, and—the key item—adjustments in middle-class entitlements to hold down deficits and maintain confidence in the financial markets.

On the other side, Clark and Weinberger opposed any departure from the President's proposed 14 percent defense increase (10 percent after inflation), which offended Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici, divided Senate Republicans, and enhanced the leverage of Senate Democrats. To get any budget at all out of his committee, Domenici adopted the Democratic proposal in hopes of amending it on the floor until it was acceptable to the White House. Weinberger, who was budget director in the Nixon Administration, has counseled the President to forget the congressional budget process and do battle with Congress over individual appropriations bills—vetoing them if necessary—in order to get his way. This confrontation strategy is of a piece with Weinberger's attitudes toward foreign allies such as Europe and Israel and adversaries such as the Soviet Union.

The problem is that the President can veto appropriations bills only for discretionary domestic spending programs, which represent a mere 17 percent of the federal budget, and the Administration has already cut these to ribbons. To make real budget reductions, the President needs to trim Social Security, federal retirement, Medicare, and other non-means-tested entitlement programs. He cannot do that without bipartisan cooperation, and he can't get that without agreeing to some defense cuts and tax increases. Moderate Democrats confess that they do not really want to slash defense down to 4 or even 2 percent—as the House voted—or to eliminate the third year of the Reagan tax cuts. But confrontation on one side breeds confrontation on the other.

REAGANITES on both the purist side and the pragmatic side think the President can win re-election in 1984 by either confrontation or conciliation with the Democrats. The pragmatists favor a first-term scenario under which the President, having used his 1980 mandate to push through the "Reagan revolution" during his first two years in office, would now show in the second two years that he could govern on a bipartisan basis as well. With falling interest rates and a growing economy, Reagan would be re-elected as a moderate. The alternative would be to continue pushing the Reagan revolution in the second two years—to polarize politics, veto appropriations bills and continuing budget resolutions, perhaps shut down the government temporarily as he nearly did in 1982, and pin the blame on the Democrats for destroying the possibilities of bipartisanship. Under this scenario, Congress and the President might fight each other to a standstill, but issues would be framed for the election campaign so that Reagan could win a clear mandate to resume his course in 1985.

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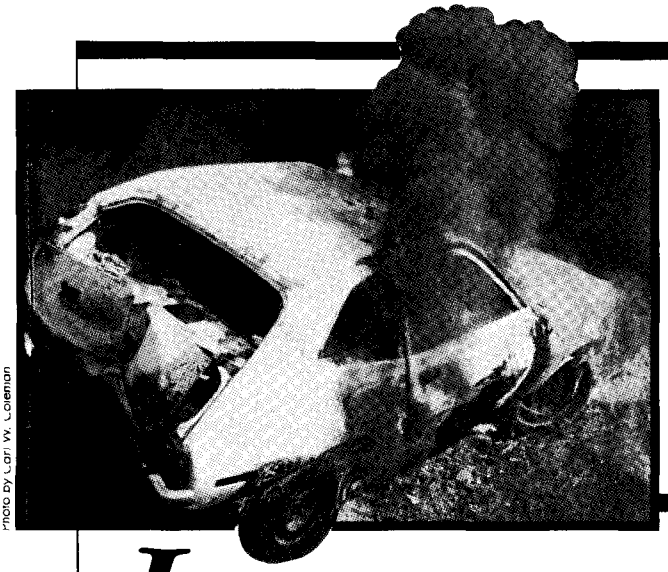

Photo by Lori W. Coleman

In 1977, We Told You Ford Pintos Had A Problem.

In 1980, We Told You That America Had A Problem.

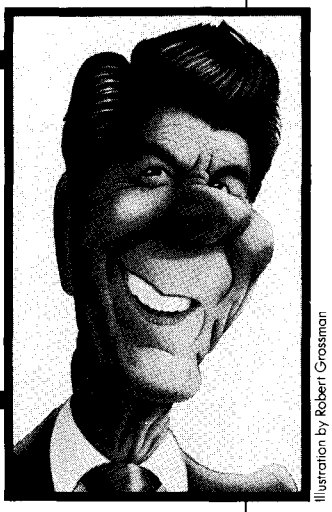

Illustration by Robert Grossman

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At the moment, with purists and pragmatists in conflict, neither vision controls Reagan policy. Baker's pragmatists still hope to achieve bipartisan resolution of the budget process, but there is every possibility that Clark-Weinberger purism will create polarized politics. The problem is that purist budget deficits may endanger economic recovery and Reagan's chances for re-election.

MORTON KONDRACKE

CROSSCURRENTS

PSEUDO-PRIVATE LIVES

POLITICAL IMAGERY derives mainly from public actions. But public actions are suspect, precisely because they are undertaken in the knowledge that they will be observed. A glimpse of private life can shape a public image far more powerfully, not just because the private revelation is more titillating, but because it has what public action can never have: the air of unself-consciousness, and thus the stamp of sincerity. The paradox, of course, is that the truly private is inaccessible, and thus immune to political exploitation. The solution is the creation of a new category of experience, the pseudo-private: ostensibly private action designed exclusively for public consumption.

We encounter the phenomenon every time a high government official who has been saying one thing for weeks is reported to believe "privately" the opposite. This private confession, of course, appears on the front page of *The New York Times*. Here the word private is emptied of its conventional meaning ("not public, or open to or shared with or known to the public"); it is meant to be taken as a substitute for "genuine." But since these revelations are not the inadvertent slips of a tongue loosened by fatigue or a double martini—they are public utterances wrapped in the aura of truthfulness that surrounds privacy—the whole maneuver is a fraud. But it works.

It works even in less subtle forms, like political advertising, where simulated intimacy is a staple. One technique is to give the impression that the camera has stumbled on a characteristic domestic scene, like the Tom Hayden ad in which we chance upon him packing his kids off to school, or the Nancy Kassebaum ad in which Nancy and her Dad, Alf Landon, sit around the den chatting about leadership. In general, the idea is to let the microphone into the confessional for selected excerpts; or to use 35mm Technicolor to produce the effect of a Super-8 home movie. The purest form of the art is simple fabrication. That is a specialty of hagiographers, like our own Parson Weems. He knew the power of anecdote, its ability to shape perceptions of character; and unlike his subject, George Washington, he did not feel himself to be constrained by the requirements of truth. It wasn't until the fifth edition of his *Life and Memorable Actions of George Washington* that he came up with the cherry tree episode, yet for the last 150 years it has set the standard for the genre. As *Newsweek* said of Hitler's "secret diaries," "genuine or not, it almost doesn't matter in the end." Weems would have understood. As long as a revelation is believed, it will have its effect.

The effect is not always positive. Jimmy Carter learned this when a chance encounter with an aquatic rabbit turned into a metaphor for the ineptness of his Presidency. (Carter, mistakenly assuming that documentary evidence could attenuate the power of such parables, produced a fuzzy photo designed to show that his disposition toward the rabbit was both manly and pacific, but the damage was done.) Richard Nixon learned the same lesson when he released a few tapes, thinking they would exonerate him. And God only knows what Lyndon Johnson was thinking when he showed his gallbladder scar to the press; but had he known it would create an image of almost grotesque crassness, he might have kept his shirt tucked in.

The greatest political consultant of them all thought that leaders should always keep their shirts tucked in. Machiavelli advised princes to cultivate a calculated aloofness to protect the mystique of power. In an age of revolving Borgias, that was good advice. But today the powerful national leader feels the opposite need: to humanize himself by judicious curtain-lifting that allows selected glimpses of the man as he really is—that is, as he is meant to be seen. The process goes on all the time, but the last month has produced three particularly elegant examples of the political use of intimacy.

KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN, working through Karen Elliott House and *The Wall Street Journal*, has just produced a classic of the pseudo-private confession. It illustrates quite brilliantly the dual purpose of the genre: to rewrite history and to reshape character. For Hussein, giving the world his own version of events (what in another context is known as an alibi) is very important. Consider the problem posed for him by President Reagan's peace plan. He is a king in a region of the world where everyone is at war. A peace plan is proposed that hinges on him. He faces the most difficult negotiations of his life. At the end of these weeks of negotiations he will have to make a decision which, one way or the other, will enrage powerful friends and enemies. What to do? Hussein, who makes up in craftiness what he lacks in courage, invited a sympathetic reporter—and only one reporter—to tag along after him through the weeks of decision, and, most important, to share his most "private" thoughts. These thoughts included his own account of his private communications with President Reagan and other world leaders, and of the course and content of his private negotiations with Yasir Arafat. The net effect of this personal history was to demonstrate how Hussein had been let down by Reagan, King Fahd, Menachem Begin, and Yasir Arafat

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(everyone, it seems, but the pregnant Queen Noor) and thus simply could not be expected to join the peace process. Most observers, including Ms. House herself, were sophisticated enough to discount many of Hussein's claims. Nevertheless, the sensational private revelations had their effect. In a subsequent editorial-page piece Ms. House followed Hussein closely in apportioning blame for the current Middle East stalemate. And NBC's John Chancellor, cloaked regardless of season in hand-me-down opinions, cited the House articles as evidence that the Reagan plan had been done in—by George Shultz and his aversion to Middle-East travel.

THE PSEUDO-CONFESSIONAL aims to rewrite history, but its subtler purpose is to reshape image. Hussein had another problem. With the Middle East falling apart and himself immobile as usual, his friends and admirers in the West were getting tired, even skeptical, of his image as a plucky, courageous little king cruelly constrained by circumstance. Well, after reading about his troubled sleep, his anxieties, and his nightmares, interspersed with private shows of attentiveness to son and family (all duly reported on page one), one is tempted to nominate him for 4-H Club Father of the Year. He may be a king, but he is human. Doth not a king fret? After all, his grandfather was assassinated. And the bullet that was meant for Hussein was deflected by a medal on his chest. Wouldn't that make you a lifelong equivocator?

We're all human, of course, but you and I are not responsible for the fate of a nation. Leaders who are must be judged by different standards. The fact that F.D.R. was sick at Yalta may make interesting history, but it doesn't lower the standards by which we must judge his decisions there. Menachem Begin broke his hip and now walks with a cane, but statesmen cannot lean on such infirmities as excuses. Hussein's disability is the lack of courage. Winston Churchill once wrote that "nothing in life is as exhilarating as to be shot at without result." For Hussein nothing in life is as debilitating. And to judge by his pseudo-confession, he hopes that nothing will be quite as exonerating. As soon as the human, private side of him can be seen, the world will understand why he cannot act. (President Mubarak was grazed by a bullet in the Sadat assassination; Begin has narrowly escaped death many times. But only of Hussein is it said, and always said, that he *cannot* act, when what is meant is that he *will* not act.) The Middle East burns. Other leaders are properly excoriated for lacking the courage to act. But not Hussein. He has nightmares.

Yuri Andropov is not quite as expansive as Hussein, but his contribution to the literature of political pseudo-intimacy is far more imaginative. When Samantha Smith, age ten, from Manchester, Maine, wrote to him expressing her worries about nuclear war, and asking, by the way, why he wanted "to conquer the world or at least the United States," Yuri wrote back. First he told her that she was "a courageous and honest girl, resembling in some way Becky, Tom Sawyer's friend from the well-known book by your compatriot Mark Twain." (We finally know what Andropov reads when he is not listening to jazz.) "Yes, Samantha," he continued (a pity her name's not Virginia), "we in the Soviet Union are endeavoring and doing everything so that there will be no war between our two countries. . . . That's what we were taught to do by Vladimir Lenin, the great founder of our state." Good stuff, especially when read on national television by little Samantha herself. (The Soviet Embassy called her a couple of days ahead of time to alert her, and whoever else might be interested in her private correspondence, of the letter's arrival.) The sight of this sweet-looking ten-year-old on TV, reading a little passage from her Russian pen pal (as the former K.G.B. chief was jauntily referred to) made me wonder if perhaps it wasn't time to send David Garth, Jerry Rafshoon, and the rest to Moscow for training. But then again, the Soviets are still relative pikers at this sort of thing. The world leader in the technology of spurious intimacy remains the White House and its mechanical monster, the autopen, a machine that wields a real pen to actually write the President's signature on letters so that birthday greetings to hundred-year-olds do not have the appearance of having been artificially produced. It's a forger's dream. Which brings us to Hitler's diaries.

UNLIKE the Hussein confessions and the Andropov letter, the Hitler diaries spare us the problem of deciding how much is from the heart and how much is ulterior motive. They represent pseudo-intimacy in its rarest form: a pure culture created, literally, under laboratory conditions.

Imagine that you want to change history. There are two ways of doing it. You can change the future by becoming a world-historical figure. Your chances of doing that are four billion to, say, ten. Or you could change the past by rewriting history. How? By harnessing the most powerful political tool of all: people's utter fascination with the private acts of the great, and their habit of confusing the private with the true. Forge a diary, and the world will proclaim that history now has to be rewritten to accommodate it.

The problem with the Hitler scam is that from the start it was as phony as a three-mark bill. It was too theatrical (found in a hayloft? come on, guys), too clumsily conceived (do even people of Kantian discipline—which Hitler was not—keep thirteen years of diaries in identical notebooks?), and too circumstantially implausible (can anyone running an empire and a world war keep a diary for thirteen years, and have none of his hundreds of associates ever make mention of it?).

So who did it? We don't know who the author(s) is, but we can guess at his intent. Consider the evidence: the implication that Hitler did send Hess on his peace mission to Britain; second thoughts about whether to crush the British at Dunkirk, or let them go; no reference to the Holocaust; an expression of regret about the amount of destruction on *Kristallnacht*; a thoughtful reference to Eva Braun. One expects in the next installment to read nice

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things about dogs and small children. One senses here the hand of keepers of the flame working into the night to rehabilitate their old boss, to make him human.

Whoever they are, and however clumsy, the forgers had the right idea. Their task was awesome. Humanizing Hitler is the ultimate feat of political jujitsu. Archimedes thought he needed a lever to move the world. In politics, a diary will do.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Compromising positions.

MASTERPIECE MARKET

A SEVEN-FOOT yellow bird dances awkwardly on the screen. Little voices sing, "Can you tell me how to get to Sesame Street?" As the camera pulls away, an announcer breaks in: "This program has been brought to you by the letter 'A' and the number seven." Such whimsy may make for good children's entertainment, but public television administrators are finding that in the real world whimsy can't pay the bills. Soon children watching Big Bird may hear that the show is sponsored not by the letter 'A', but by Coco-Puffs or Mattel Toys. After years of federal funding and corporate underwriting, public broadcasting is experimenting with real advertising.

In June the Temporary Commission on Alternative Financing for Public Telecommunications will make a final evaluation of an eighteen-month experiment that allowed ten stations to carry advertising. Two of the stations are running something called "enhanced underwriting"—eighteen seconds of highlights from an upcoming show combined with a ten-second identification of the show's underwriters. The other stations are running standard advertising in blocks at the beginning and end of shows. The commission had hoped the experiment would make public broadcasters some money without sullying their virtue. Twelve months later, many of its members are ready to call the experiment a success, extend its run, and recommend that Congress make it permanent.

The move toward commercial "noncommercial" television is the result of funding losses at the federal level. Public television has always been underfunded. In 1967 Congress authorized $9 million to get the project off the ground, but offered no plan for long-term support. President Johnson assured the Corporation for Public Broadcasting that he would develop a method for distributing funds; he never did. Today PBS relies on federal support for 25 percent of its budget. PBS President Lawrence Grossman says that in order to survive, the system needs to maintain at least its present level of $130 million annually from the government. The Reagan Administration is looking to reduce that figure to a scant $75 million by 1986. After fifteen years and half a billion taxpayer dollars, public television is being told it has no choice but to enter the private sector. The advertising experiment is the doorway into the marketplace.

The experiment's designers claim that their plan is a valid means of protecting the system from further budget cuts. "We see advertising as a way to provide more service, not less. It's a strengthening of public broadcasting," says Republican Representative Tom Tauke, a member of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Consumer Protection, and Finance, and the originator of the experiment. "The proposal is not hostile, it's designed to ensure the future of public broadcasting." But as Lawrence Grossman correctly points out, even limited advertising will subvert noncommercial television's programming policies.

Marshaling support for his position, Tauke points to a study done last December by the National Association of Public Television Stations, which found minimum viewer protest and no significant programming changes due to advertising. But the study itself notes that because most of the programs were planned long before the experiment began, the experiment was unlikely to yield much information about how advertising affects programming. The study also concludes that audience size makes commercial sales easier—and that is where the experiment fails. "When money is paid for advertising, it is not for programs, but for audiences, for potential customers," Grossman says. "Judgments are not made based on the quality of programming, but on its ability to attract people."

Even so, Grossman is the first to admit that public television hasn't ever been quite as pure as it would like us to think. "All money is tainted," he says. Noncommercial television has traditionally raised much of its money through what must be called commercial enterprises: corporate underwriting, on-the-air auctions, and audience pledge drives which hawk tote bags and umbrellas for large donations. And along with its more arcane offerings, public television often features programs—"Upstairs, Downstairs" and "Brideshead Revisited," for example—that amount to little more than soap operas for Anglophiles. But there is a big difference between PBS's present funding methods and full-fledged advertising. Corporate underwriters pay for shows, not for customers, and PBS has managed to remain somewhat insulated from the market pressures that brought you "Three's Company" and "Battle of the Network Stars." The result has been a forum for some special programs produced despite their limited audience appeal, such as Wagner's *Ring Cycle* and "The American Playhouse."

Those who support the commercial experiment say flatly that the alternative to ads on public television is no public television at all. This is just not true. Advertising is not the only way to raise money for PBS. Henry Geller, former counsel to the Federal Communications Commission, has offered one sensible plan to Congress. He suggests that the government deregulate the airwaves, as the

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networks and the Federal Communications Commission have been urging (see "Fowler's Video Games," by Mark Granetz, TNR, May 2, 1983), but set aside 1 percent of commercial stations' gross revenues for public broadcasting. "They want to deregulate so badly, give them their deregulation—and take their money for the people who want to do what the networks aren't willing to do," Geller says. Other possibilities include the leasing of some of PBS's unused equipment for private use; the use of profits generated by future PBS pay TV, subscription TV, and pay cable; or, perhaps the simplest suggestion, the appropriation of adequate funds by Congress, as Representative Tim Wirth has recommended.

The founders of public television would be dismayed to know that those who will influence its future see no alternative to commercials. In 1967 the Carnegie Commission met to answer a different question: "How can we develop a free, innovative, creative public television service which at the same time will depend in substantial measure on federal funds?" The answer came from the 1979 Carnegie Commission: you can't. "What public broadcasting tried to invent," said the commission, "was a truly radical idea; an instrument of mass communication that simultaneously respects the artistry of individuals who create programs, the needs of the public that form the audience, and the forces of political power that supply the resources. Sadly, we conclude that the invention did not work."

THE MOVE TOWARD advertising has led to much bickering. The bickerers include local public stations, which see advertising as a way of increasing their independence; the national Public Broadcasting System, which fears that a successful advertising experiment would reduce future federal support and lessen its authority over programming; and some members of Congress, who view the experiment as a way to reduce the burden of funding the system without compromising public television's mission. Local noncommercial stations see their PBS representatives in Washington as idealists who don't understand the realities of running a station. "Advertising is a way to earn 10 to 15 percent of our net operating income without jeopardizing programming. PBS administrators in Washington want to retain their power so they're trying to kill it, to kill our independence," says Vince Saele, president of WYES in New Orleans, one of the stations that is happily participating in the experiment. And Representative Tauke insists that "there is nothing inherently incompatible about advertising and public TV." But it is undeniable that advertising puts public television in direct competition with the networks for audiences. There are already hints of what that might mean: two of the stations participating in the experiment have begun airing programs received for free in exchange for running prearranged commercials. WIPB in Muncie, Indiana, is showing reruns of "The Lawrence Welk Show" and WYES in New Orleans has agreed to air the 130-part series, "In Search Of," which features Leonard Nimoy investigating things like Bigfoot and the Bermuda Triangle. The mentality behind the Lawrence Welk approach was nicely exemplified by Robert Chitester, former president of WQLN, the public station in Erie, Pennsylvania, when he wrote in *The New York Times* at the start of the experiment: "Public television must stop treating popular as bad and high cultural as good. The same need attracts viewers to soap operas and patrons to the Met. It is imperative to acknowledge and seize the opportunity of this similarity rather than continuing to promote harmful distinction. Let the viewers choose."

The trouble is that "distinction" is what public television is supposed to be about—an alternative system with high standards for specialized tastes that doesn't have to depend on the marketplace to survive. "If we're going to have a public television system, goddamn it, it should be public," says Grossman. "And if it's not important enough, then let's not have it."

Public television has never been completely noncommercial; what it has been is noncompetitive. With PBS's entry into the race for advertising money, it can't help but change the nature of its programming. What has been a genuine, if imperfect, alternative to the networks may soon become a second-rate NBC.

JEFFREY PUNDYK

An overdose of caution in Poland.

THE CHURCH UNMILITANT

AMONG MILLIONS of Poles, believers and nonbelievers alike, long accustomed to viewing the Church as a staunch ally against a detested regime, the recent actions of the Episcopate have generated disillusionment, dismay, and even some hostility. No one in Poland expected the Church to become, in the words of one underground writer, "the Church Militant." Nor does anyone question its apostolic mission. The "*raison d'être* of the Church," as another writer put it, is—rightly—to "spread the faith." Its concern about preventing bloodshed and, even more, about eventually effecting some kind of "national understanding" with the authorities has not been criticized either, especially since to this day that remains Solidarity's ultimate goal too. What most Poles did expect, however, was that the Church's concern for *spreading* the faith would be contingent on *keeping* faith with its constituents—in other words, that any agreement with the regime would not be attained at the expense of the fundamental aspirations of the people.

In the early months of martial law the policies of the Church seemed to conform to these expectations. In numerous statements the Polish bishops, as well as the new primate, Jozef Glemp, condemned the Jaruzelski regime for its repressions, defended underground Solidarity, and

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provided thousands of prisoners with material and moral support. The Church also made it clear that the price of any understanding must be not only the release of Walesa and permission for a papal visit, but also an unconditional amnesty for all political prisoners and the gradual restoration of free trade unions.

Over the past year, this position has changed. Contacts between the Church and Jaruzelski's regime have been reestablished, and references either to an amnesty or to Solidarity have become rare. The bombshell came last November 8: a government communiqué announced that the primate and Jaruzelski, at a meeting in which both men "reviewed the current situation in the country," expressed a "common concern for maintaining and consolidating calm, social harmony, and active work," and agreed to launch preparations for the Pope's June visit.

This meeting, which bore all the earmarks of what one Catholic writer angrily denounced as "a secret concordat between the Polish Church and the state," and which many underground Solidarity activists viewed as a sellout of their union and a betrayal of the society as a whole, indicated above all that the Pope's visit had become the Church's paramount goal. True, Walesa was released. True, when martial law was "suspended" and the government incorporated some of its worst practices into new legislation—thus making a mockery of its claims of liberalization—the bishops issued a strong statement protesting the continuous, and now institutionalized, "repressions and violations of human and civic rights." It is also true that in the past few months occasional sermons by the primate, as well as statements issued by the Episcopate, have spoken of the need for an amnesty and for the "right of workers to organize themselves in such unions as suit them and which defend their real interests."

BY AND LARGE, however, the pronouncements of the Church have tended to concentrate on the benefits of the Pope's forthcoming visit (the final details of which were agreed upon in March), and on appeals for peace, "Christian brotherhood," love, and other standard verities. In his Easter sermon, for instance, as well as in the message issued traditionally on the same day, Glemp spoke vaguely about "deprivations of liberty" and "manipulation of the media," yet said not a word either about Solidarity or a political amnesty—in the past, two of the major demands of the Church.

The Church's shocking turnaround has hurt the underground; the November 8 communiqué, for instance, came two days before open protest demonstrations Solidarity had called for, and effectively dampened enthusiasm for them. What explains the shift? Why has the Church contradicted its principles, and why has it conceded (and risked) so much for a papal visit? Poles have been asking these questions, with perplexity and distress, for months.

There are a number of plausible explanations. The Pope's intense desire to revisit his homeland is said to rest on a belief that his presence may infuse the population with the hope and self-confidence that have been drained away by the trials of the past year and a half. The primate may be, as some of his critics have charged, woefully shortsighted in assuming (as he himself admitted during a tumultuous meeting with several hundred rebellious priests) that the time for protests has passed and that the Church must content itself with winning minor concessions from the authorities. It is also conceivable that under current circumstances the Church has decided, as one underground writer ironically put it, that "trade union matters belong to Caesar and can be sacrificed on the altar of the authorities," and that in general "Eternity is a better bet for the continued existence of the Church in Communist states." In other words, it is possible to assume that the Church is wrong, yet still motivated above all by its concerns, spiritual or temporal, for the good of the nation.

YET CHARITABLE ASSUMPTIONS, and the preoccupation with Glemp's personality (which many Poles seem fixated on), may miss the mark. The history of relations between Church and state in Communist Poland has by no means been one of continuous strife between two intransigent institutions, each bent on forcing the other to its knees. The Church, anxious to preserve its institutional prerogatives, has on more than one occasion been willing to lend its support to the state in exchange for tangible benefits. In the immediate postwar period, for example, the regime needed the collaboration of the Church. It therefore deliberately refrained from confiscating most of its estates, allowed religious services to be broadcast over the radio, introduced compulsory religious education into the public schools, and required conscripts to attend mass every Sunday. In return the bishops issued several appeals to the population to refrain from any resistance to the authorities and to preserve "social peace"—a term which figures prominently in Church pronouncements today, too. To be sure, the honeymoon didn't last; eventually the authorities moved against their most potent rival, effectively—and ironically—investing the Church with unprecedented moral stature and prestige. The offensive against the Church ceased in 1956, when Wladyslaw Gomulka, returning to power, needed the support of the Church; among the privileges then granted was the right to teach catechism on public school premises—a privilege unheard of not only in other Communist countries but in any countries that honor the principle of separation of church and state.

It may be argued, of course, that a real compromise between these two powerful institutions is in the very nature of things impossible, that sooner or later any "understanding" presents unacceptable dangers to the credibility and legitimacy of one or the other, and must in the end be abrogated. Yet there is ample evidence that another attempt at a compromise between the two sparring partners is in the offing: in 1982 alone, for instance—that is, during the period of martial law—the authorities gave in on one of the major demands of the Episcopate, permitting the construction of 390 large church buildings, a staggering figure when one considers that between 1971 and

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1981 the government granted permits for only 100 churches a year. Another major demand of the Church, hotly disputed for years, has now been met: according to a decree enacted last November, the Church will henceforth benefit from generous tax exemptions. All income derived from Church property; from activities such as education, research, social work, publications, charity, and the training of clergymen; and from Church farms and gifts from abroad—will be tax free. In fact, as I was told by one knowledgeable Pole who left Poland only a short while ago, there is practically nothing that the Church cannot obtain from the regime these days: newsprint for its press (always a contentious issue in state-Church negotiations); considerable freedom of action for various lay Catholic organizations; even (though I tend to doubt this) the possible reintroduction of religious education in public schools. All that, of course, for a price: advocacy of "social peace" and "honest work," and judicious restraint in such matters as free trade unions.

In this light the papal trip becomes more meaningful—and more controversial. Both Church and regime recently disclosed that the Church never even suggested the inclusion of Gdańsk in the Pope's itinerary, an omission tainting the trip at least symbolically—for surely Gdańsk, birthplace of Solidarity and still its greatest stronghold, should at least have figured in the negotiations. That it did not adds to the pain and anger of many Poles. Of course, we want the Pope among us, they say—but at what price?

IN AN unintentionally revealing statement, Party Secretary Kazimierz Barcikowski recently told the Warsaw correspondent of the Italian newspaper *Il Tempo* that the authorities are exceedingly satisfied with the arrangements for the Pope's visit, and especially with the cooperation shown by the Church in not even listing Gdańsk on the proposed itinerary. If the Pope did visit Gdańsk, said Barcikowski, the visit would not be "tranquil." But after all, he continued, the primate (who arranged the trip) "is a prince of a great Church, and the head of a strongly disciplined organization, certainly more disciplined than our party." The meaning of this convoluted compliment seems fairly clear: the party—that "leading force" in Polish society, as it has always been pleased to call itself—is in shambles, its credibility gone and its ability to enforce discipline reduced to coercion by the police and army apparat. Therefore it turns to the Church with the request to use its influence and authority to bring about the necessary "discipline" in the country, so that the rulers may rule without fear of upheavals.

This calculation, like so many others, is likely to come to grief. While Glemp and part of the Church hierarchy may indeed be groping toward a serious accommodation with the regime, a good part of the lower clergy, to say nothing of many Polish intellectuals and Solidarity activists, are fiercely opposed to one. Despite all the arrests, trials, and massive propaganda directed against it, the structure of the underground—including a remarkably flourishing press—remains intact, and it still enjoys the loyalty of most Poles. Solidarity's leadership has candidly acknowledged that some of its tactics during martial law—above all its reliance on the weapon of a general strike—have been wrong. But it is determined to keep up the pressure, to make its presence known, and to serve notice on the authorities that they can neither buy off nor crush an angry and resentful people.

In the past few weeks there has been a remarkable resurgence of activism. The unauthorized ceremony at the Warsaw Ghetto memorial was attended by a thousand people and was addressed by Solidarity's former press spokesman, Janusz Onyszkiewicz (who was then detained by the police). The new trade unions have been singularly unsuccessful in attracting workers into their ranks (only about 15 percent of the work force has joined them). Writers, artists, and actors continue to resist cooptation; Walesa—despite severe constraints on his activities and continuous harassment—has steadily displayed political acumen and moral valor in his actions and statements, thereby maintaining his hold on popular affection and respect. The most dramatic evidence of Solidarity's continued vitality, however, was the success of its call for May Day demonstrations. Tens of thousands of Poles—whom General Jaruzelski had mocked earlier in the day as "a miserable margin without any chance for success"—turned out last Sunday for pro-Solidarity demonstrations in twenty Polish towns. In Gdańsk they marched to Walesa's home, where they met the swinging truncheons of the police. This was exactly what the regime had feared (so much that it asked the Church to cancel its Sunday morning masses). All this suggests that the government's attempt to achieve "normalization" has hardly been a success. Perhaps Jaruzelski is still contemplating a partial amnesty for the thousands of political prisoners who fill the jails (a possibility, despite official disclaimers); but with a constantly restive population he is more likely to pursue repressive methods—and thus to perpetuate the conflict between the regime and its subjects.

Under these conditions the Church may end up moving back toward a more radical position vis-à-vis the regime—or at the very least halting its efforts to reach a compromise. In the late 1970s its alliance with the workers, the intelligentsia, and the political opposition was dictated as much by humanitarian as by political considerations. The same considerations are likely to prevail again. Neither Glemp nor the Pope—whose fundamental commitment to the ideals of Solidarity is beyond question—can long afford to follow a course that the nation will interpret as a sellout. Enjoined by its teachings to "bear witness to the truth," the Church may well be compelled to recognize the truth for what it is: namely, that despite its sham "suspension" last December, a state of war exists between the rulers and their collaborators on the one hand, and the rest of society on the other. In that context any talk about "reconciliation" is patently fraudulent, and any attempt to attain it can only end in ignominy.

ABRAHAM BRUMBERG

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Long after F.D.R., he was still a 'liberal fanatic.'

RONALD REAGAN'S LIBERAL PAST

BY WILLIAM E. LEUCHTENBURG

THE REPUBLICAN delegates arrayed row on row at the 1980 national convention in Detroit could not believe what they were hearing. This was supposed to be the finest hour for American conservatives in half a century. In nominating Ronald Reagan they had chosen an uncompromising right-wing ideologue and one who, unlike Barry Goldwater sixteen years before, had a good chance of winning. They had come to the great arena that night to take part in a secular rite at which their candidate would pay homage to the totems of their party, and here he was quoting not Lincoln, not Coolidge, but Franklin D. Roosevelt. They had been cheering lustily, but when they heard those words, they fell momentarily into a chilled silence.

The delegates should not have been so worried. In quoting F.D.R. in Detroit, Reagan was not modifying his views; on the contrary, he was exploiting Roosevelt for conservative ends. Reagan concluded his acceptance address by stating:

> The time is now to redeem promises once made to the American people by another candidate, in another time and another place. He said:
>
> 'For three long years I have been going up and down this country preaching that government—federal, state and local—costs too much. I shall not stop that preaching. As an immediate program of action, we must abolish useless offices. We must eliminate unnecessary functions of government. . . .
>
> 'I propose to you, my friends, and through you, that government of all kinds, big and little, be made solvent and that the example be set by the President of the United States and his Cabinet.'
>
> So said Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his acceptance speech to the Democratic National Convention in July 1932. . . . Isn't now the time that we, the people, carried out these unkept promises?

Far from reflecting a "new Reagan" seeking an accommodation with liberal thought, the Detroit speech encapsulated what he had been saying for more than two decades: government had become too big, too remote.

Of course, Reagan must have known how much he would profit by associating himself with Roosevelt. Still, his allusions to F.D.R. came naturally. Roosevelt had been his first political hero, and he never got over that adulation. When David McCullough interviewed Roosevelt's successors on the occasion of the F.D.R. centenary, he found Ford listless, Carter guarded, but Reagan so chockful of enthusiasm that in the midst of a busy White House schedule he went on talking about F.D.R. beyond the allotted time and "with the most obvious fondness." Reagan, McCullough concluded, "sees Roosevelt as his 'kind of guy'—confident, cheerful, theatrical, larger than life."

If even astute writers find it hard to come to terms with this paradox—that Reagan is a sincere Roosevelt admirer intent on ridding the land of F.D.R.'s influence—one should not wonder, for no one has done more to spread confusion about Reagan's relation to Roosevelt than Reagan himself. He is forever reinventing his past, and Roosevelt's.

"I didn't desert my party," Reagan once said. "It deserted me." He explained: "I looked up F.D.R.'s old platform, and I discovered that it called for a restoration of states' rights and a reduction in the national budget. You know what? I'm still for that." This would turn out to be the most enduring of Reagan's rationales for how a Roosevelt man could become a right-wing Republican. He had been consistent all along, Reagan claimed. True, he had once voted for F.D.R., but for the F.D.R. who had run in 1932 as a budget-balancer. "The Roosevelt that I voted for had promised to cut federal spending by 25 percent, had promised to return to the states and local communities authority and autonomy that had been unjustly seized by the federal government," Reagan declared.

In advancing this notion Reagan told one interviewer that as governor of New York "Roosevelt warned of the evils of big government" and said that "Washington must be discouraged from interfering" in such fields as public utilities. It hardly needs saying that these statements mangle F.D.R.'s record. To be sure, Roosevelt held orthodox views about budget balancing, as did almost everyone else in the pre-Keynesian era. But the distinguishing fact about Roosevelt in 1932 was not that he sometimes spoke of retrenchment but that he stood out among the nation's governors precisely because he was willing to go much further in advocating government regulation of utilities, public development, and the responsibility of the state to the jobless.

Reagan's version of events distorted his own history

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even more than Roosevelt's. Far from having supported F.D.R. only in 1932, as his comments implied, Reagan voted for Roosevelt in 1936, 1940, and 1944 as well. Indeed, Reagan's devotion to Roosevelt was greatest not in 1932, when F.D.R. made the pledge of slashing government spending, but after he had put through the precedent-smashing legislation that centralized authority in Washington. At twenty-one, Reagan cast his first ballot for F.D.R.—not because he was attracted by Roosevelt's desire for a balanced budget, but because he was born into a Democratic family. "I was, I guess, a Democrat because my father had been," Reagan has recalled. Moreover, in 1936, when Roosevelt was unmistakably a New Deal candidate, Reagan was thrilled when, for the first and only time, he saw him in a parade. Did he cheer? "Oh, of course!" he told McCullough. "Yes!"

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Three years earlier, when Roosevelt delivered his first inaugural address, the radio announcer manning the booth at WHO Des Moines was Ronald Reagan, and he never forgot that day. In 1976 he told a reporter, "I still believe when he was first inaugurated, yes, if he didn't do anything else, he gave back to the people of this country their courage. His line 'We have nothing to fear but fear itself' was one that can be repeated many times in many circumstances." Reagan learned passages of the first inaugural address by heart, and he developed a convincing impersonation of F.D.R., even to the right flourish with an imaginary cigarette holder.

Far from being a consistent opponent of the welfare state linked to the age of Roosevelt only by his 1932 vote, Reagan had the most intimate connection with the New Deal, for the head of the W.P.A. in Dixon, Illinois, Ronald Reagan's home town, was his father, Jack. An unemployed shoe salesman, Jack Reagan got back on a payroll by ringing doorbells for F.D.R. in 1932. As reward he received a job in the Roosevelt relief operation. Even in the 1980s Ronald Reagan was capable of forgetting his commitment to limited government long enough to wax eloquent about the W.P.A., the agency F.D.R.'s conservative opponents scorned above all others. "Now, a lot of people remember it as boondoggles. . . ." he noted. "But I can take you to our town and show you things, like a river front that I used to hike through once that was swamp and is now a beautiful park-like place built by W.P.A."

This attachment to Roosevelt and his views did not end in 1945. In his autobiography, Reagan, abandoning his claim to have been only a 1932 Democrat, confessed that he had been "a near-hopeless hemophilic liberal," not only in the age of Roosevelt but in the years after the war. He served on the boards of directors of both the United World Federalists and the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee for the Arts, Sciences, and Professions. On several occasions the Democratic left tried to get him to run for Congress or the California legislature. Reagan was regarded as so far to the left that when he turned up at a caucus of anti-Communists, Olivia DeHavilland was astonished because she thought that he was with the Stalinist cadre. In fact, he had never been a fellow traveler but rather, as he would later admit to a journalist, "a very emotional New Dealer."

In 1947 Ronald Reagan helped found the California branch of Americans for Democratic Action, the main legatee of Roosevelt liberalism, and left the Washington headquarters of A.D.A. "really impressed" with his attitude. His participation in a group that was denounced by the Republican right was far from perfunctory; he subsequently served as a member of the national board. When in the fall of 1947 he testified in Washington, James Loeb Jr., A.D.A.'s executive secretary, wrote him a fan letter saying that he had heard "from our New York office and from all around this town of Washington, D.C., that your testimony was considered, by all odds, the most honest and forthright from a decent liberal point of view." Loeb added: "It was an encouraging experience to have had a chance to talk to you and to know that there are people in your position who share so completely

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a liberal point of view. . . . What we liberals need most of all on our side is a bit of genuine liberal fanaticism."

The testimony that elicited such encomiums from A.D.A. came before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, where Reagan did well. While Gary Cooper denounced the "pink mouthings" of Hollywood Communists and Robert Montgomery blustered that he was ready to take up arms against the Reds, Ronald Reagan, the "boyish-looking movie hero," stated that the best way to combat communism was "to make democracy work," adding that he shared Jefferson's belief that "if all of the American people know all of the facts, they'll never make a mistake." With regard to the popular proposal to outlaw the Communists, Reagan told the committee, "As a citizen I would hesitate, or not like, to see any political party outlawed on the basis of its political ideology." When the handsome movie star, in a tan gabardine suit set off by a blue knitted tie, walked into the hearing room, "there was a long-drawn-out 'ooooh' from the jam-packed, predominantly feminine audience," said *The New York Times*. But Reagan was not just another pretty face. He not only responded well to the questioning, but after the committee chairman dismissed him, he still had a thought he wanted to express about the Communists: "Sir, . . . I detest, I abhor their philosophy . . . but at the same time I never as a citizen want to see our country become urged, by either fear or resentment of this group, that we ever compromise with any of our democratic principles."

A year later Reagan headed the Labor League of Hollywood Voters for Truman, and gave a radio address under the sponsorship of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union on behalf of the President and the Democratic Senatorial candidate Hubert Humphrey, whom he praised for "fighting for . . . adequate low-cost housing, for civil rights, for prices people can afford to pay, and for a labor movement free of the Taft-Hartley Law." Humphrey's opponent, Reagan said derisively, was "the banner carrier for Wall Street." Noting that inflation had hurt ordinary people, he pointed his finger at Standard Oil. "High prices," Reagan contended, "have not been caused by higher wages, but by bigger and bigger profits." In 1976 California partygoers still played a 1940s tape of Reagan introducing Humphrey that was described by James M. Perry as "quintessential left-wing stuff."

In 1950, to his subsequent discomfort, Reagan backed the California A.D.A. Democrat Helen Gahagan Douglas in her campaign against Richard Nixon for a U.S. Senate seat. Reagan later said that he never made any speech for Mrs. Douglas but only supported her in the course of giving a general endorsement to the Democratic slate in 1950; he had already decided that she was "awfully naive about the subject of Communists," but he did not think it was right to say so publicly. In fact, a Douglas campaign office memo in December 1949 listed "Ronnie Reagan" as one of the Hollywood personalities to be signed up in January, and by March he was in a select group of a dozen actors and actresses, including Myrna Loy, Lena Horne, and Eddie Cantor, who were "sponsors" of the candidacy of Helen Gahagan Douglas. During the campaign he was on a number of three-minute radio spots for her that were widely aired in California. He was even recommended by her campaign manager to be a "state-wide front" for her effort, but, according to one account, her top aides decided to keep Reagan's name off the campaign letterhead because he had too leftist a reputation.

WHEN REAGAN did change his views, he gave no evidence of a sudden revulsion against F.D.R. and the Democrats. In 1952 he was a Democrat for Eisenhower, as were a lot of others that year, but in 1953 he chaired a committee to re-elect as mayor of Los Angeles a man strongly backed by liberals and unionists in the city. In the 1960 election he still identified himself as a Democrat, though for Nixon. Not until 1962 did he change his registration to Republican. And even in later years Roosevelt's style was still a model for Reagan. In the 1950s, Theodore White has written, Reagan "learned new rhythms, the hesitation, the toss of the head, the style that he claimed had been inspired by watching Franklin D. Roosevelt." As governor, Reagan released a report on the first hundred days of his administration and adapted F.D.R.'s fireside chats to the demands of television.

When Reagan was not attempting to resolve the contradiction between his identification with F.D.R. and his right-wing ideology by denying his past, he did so by insisting that he and Roosevelt shared the same conservative outlook. To this end he kept on hand a cache of F.D.R. quotes to be drawn upon at his pleasure, and often with little regard for the facts.

There is no clearer instance of Reagan's distortion of Roosevelt's record than his frequent citation of a sentence from a Presidential message of January 1935 to prove that his attitude toward the unemployed and F.D.R.'s were consistent. In 1976 Reagan told a correspondent that Roosevelt "said the federal government should get out of the business of welfare," and he was still maintaining at the end of 1981: "Roosevelt at one time made a statement that the federal government had to get out of the business of—we didn't call it 'welfare' then, we called it 'relief.' . . . As

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he explained, . . . the federal government was not the proper agency for that."

Roosevelt did say, "The federal government must and shall quit this business of relief," but he said it in a message to Congress in which he called for a massive federal works program to give the able-bodied jobless not "relief" but "employment" through the biggest peacetime appropriation in the history of this or any nation. In quoting the sentence he was so fond of citing, Reagan neglected to add what F.D.R. said next: "The federal government is the only governmental agency with sufficient power and credit to meet this situation. We have assumed this task and we shall not shrink from it in the future." Congress responded with a multibillion-dollar appropriation that made possible the creation of the W.P.A. and the National Youth Administration. To help those who were not employable, Roosevelt submitted an unprecedented social insurance proposal, and less than eight months later Congress made good his promise by enacting his plan into law as the Social Security Act of 1935.

Reagan couldn't ignore the fact that the New Deal had made a transformation that carried into the postwar era; however, he attributed this legacy not to Roosevelt but to the men around him, for he never wanted to blame the idol of his youth for anything—least of all for the leviathan in Washington. "President Roosevelt started administering medicine to a sick patient, but those people who then gathered around and became the structure of government had no intention of letting the patient get well and cut him off the medicine," he asserted. "Their goal was supreme centralized authority." After noting the allegedly statist view of such men as Harold Ickes, he added, "Well, I don't believe that that was really in Roosevelt's mind."

IN THE SPRING OF 1976 Reagan carried his charges about F.D.R.'s statist advisers to the point of absurdity. He told *Time*, "Fascism was really the basis for the New Deal. It was Mussolini's success in Italy, with his government-directed economy, that led the early New Dealers to say, 'But Mussolini kept the trains running on time.' " The remarks did not draw much attention when they were made, but in the 1980 campaign they would provide the wedge for Democrats seeking to forestall Reagan's attempt to "kidnap Franklin Roosevelt."

At the 1980 Democratic Convention Teddy Kennedy drew the delegates out of their chairs when he stated that "the same Republicans who are invoking Franklin Roosevelt have nominated a man who said in 1976, and these are his exact words: 'Fascism was really the basis of the New Deal.' And that nominee, whose name is Ronald Reagan, has no right to quote Franklin Delano Roosevelt." Two days later Fritz Mondale, in another rousing speech to the convention, said, "After all, what kind of person would try to wipe out every program since Roosevelt? He'd have to be a person who believes, 'Fascism was really the basis for the New Deal.' Who would ever say something like that? Ronald Reagan!"

Reagan would have been well advised to let Mondale's reminder of his earlier misstatement lie, but he insisted on repeating it. "Anyone who wants to look at the writings of the members of the Brain Trust of the New Deal will find that President Roosevelt's advisers admired the fascist system," he declared. He added with abandon, "They coined the expression that Mussolini made the the trains run on time. They thought that private ownership with government management and control à la the Italian system was the way to go and that has been evident in all their writings."

There is absolutely no evidence in the writings of the Brain Trust—Rexford Tugwell, Raymond Moley, Adolf Berle—of admiration for fascism. Not even the National Industrial Recovery Act owed anything to fascism. It derived instead from a wide variety of American sources, including the trade association movement fostered by business in the 1920s and the "Swope Plan," elaborated by Gerard Swope of General Electric. It is absurd to say that Roosevelt's advisers coined the expression that Mussolini made the trains run on time; that was a commonplace long before the New Deal, and it was advanced not by liberals but by the right, by those who would be F.D.R.'s fiercest critics—and, later, the nucleus of the Reagan coalition. In the 1920s Italian fascism found far less favor with liberals than with business leaders—the head of the house of Morgan, the counsel of the National Association of Manufacturers, and the president of the New York Stock Exchange. But by now it is clear that no recital of contrary evidence will persuade Reagan to abandon his tale—that F.D.R. was a heroic statesman, much to be admired, who came close to bringing fascism to America.

All of Reagan's stratagems served to obfuscate the truth, which is not that Reagan was a one-time-only F.D.R. supporter, not that Roosevelt was a fellow conservative, not that the New Dealers derived their ideas from Mussolini, but that sometime in the 1950s Reagan radically altered his political colors. To cover up this fact Reagan again sought to rewrite the past.

NEVER AT A LOSS for explanations, Reagan offered more than one reason for his departure from the Democratic Party and its New Deal emphasis. Sometimes he traced his estrangement to memories of his father "coming home day after day so frustrated that you wouldn't believe it" because relief agency bureaucrats were more interested in preserving a system of handouts than in getting their "clients" back to work. At other times he said that his growing suspicion of centralized government increased during World War II, when, because of civil service regulations, he was restrained from firing civilian employees who he, as base personnel officer at Culver City, thought should be dismissed. Yet neither of these recollections explained why he voted for Roosevelt all four times and remained a "hemophilic liberal" in the postwar period. He may well have had "some misgivings," as he claimed in his autobiography. More to the point, though, was his frank acknowledgement, "I had followed F.D.R. blindly."

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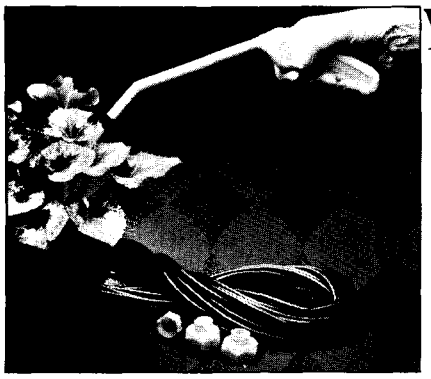

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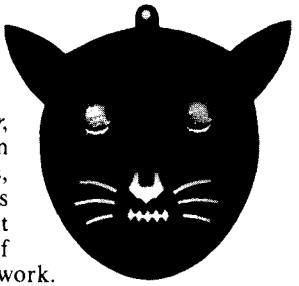
Le Chat Noir



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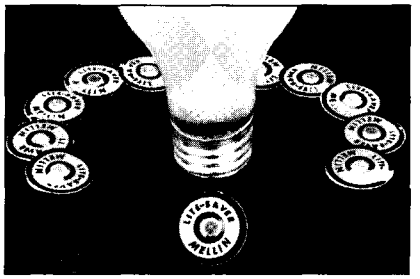

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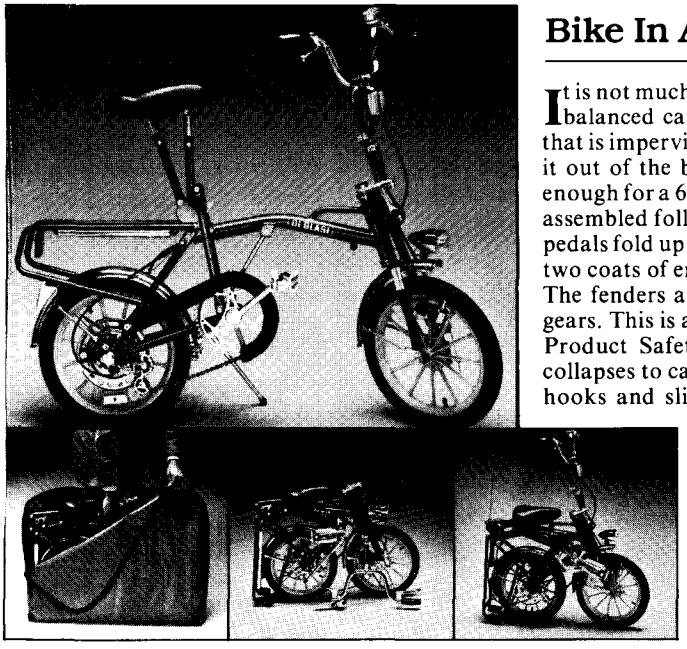

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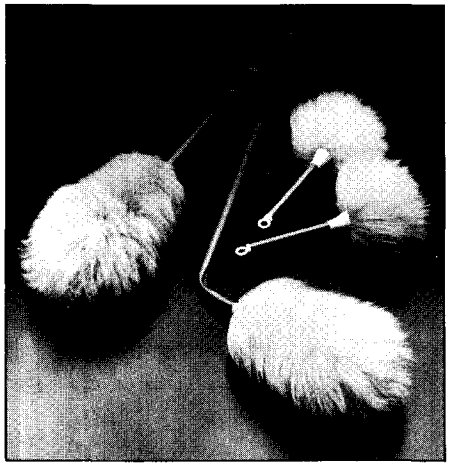
It is not much larger than a briefcase: 36″ long, 24″ high, 10″ wide with a nicely balanced carrying handle. It is protected inside a heavy zippered blue bag that is impervious to water and gasoline. But in less than a minute you can have it out of the bag and unfolded to make an exceptionally sturdy bicycle big enough for a 6′2″ man, easy handling enough for a 5′ woman. Each bike is hand assembled following a design that pays exquisite attention to detail — even the pedals fold up out of the way. The tubular steel frame is rustproofed, then given two coats of enamel. All the nuts and bolts are zinc or nickel cadmium plated. The fenders are stainless steel. Internal drum brakes. Three-speed derailleur gears. This is a real bike that excels all the requirements of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. Yet the concept is so brilliant that the bike collapses to carrying size with four quick moves — fold the pedals, release two hooks and slide it shut. It honestly takes all of 15 seconds. The bike was invented by an Italian aeronautical engineer who wanted a bicycle he could fold up and carry in a light plane. In Europe it is extremely popular with commuters. Each DiBlasi Folding Bicycle comes with generator powered front and rear lights, bell, 3 position adjustable seat, air pump, reflectors, kickstand, rear carrier, owner's manual with maintenance instructions and costs **$350.00** ($24.95) #A676. No assembly is required. Weight is 35 lbs.



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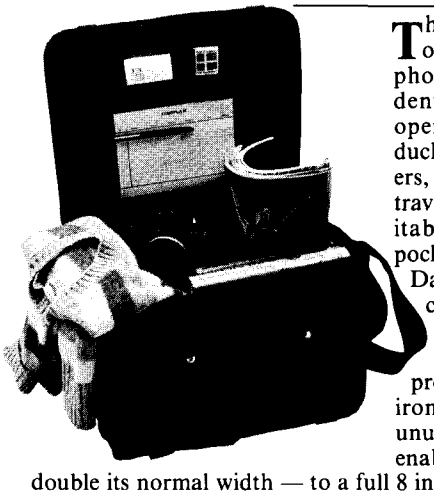

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On still other occasions Reagan has said that his encounters with the Stalinists changed his political complexion. When Jimmy Roosevelt asked the board of the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of Arts, Sciences, and Professions to adopt an anti-Communist resolution, Reagan came to his aid, only to be denounced as "capitalist scum" and "enemy of the proletariat." He later explained, "Light was dawning in some obscure region in my head. I was beginning to see the seamy side of liberalism," a curious statement given the fact that Jimmy Roosevelt had provided the leadership and that his colleagues in A.D.A. took a strong stand against communism. Furthermore, not for some time after his I.C.C.A.S.P. days did he abandon his liberal associates and join the ranks of the conservatives.

One cannot say with confidence what brought about this shift, save that it seems to have been related to his economic circumstances. A man of considerable wealth as a result of movie contracts and land investment, he resented the bite federal taxes took from his income. He felt adversely affected, too, by the Truman Administration's antitrust suit against the movie studios, and during the four months he spent in England in 1949 filming *The Hasty Heart* he became irritated at such vexations of the new social order as the restriction on the amount of currency he could take home with him. And the switch came in a period when his life was breaking up—his first marriage had ended in divorce, his career was fading.

AT THIS CRITICAL STAGE Reagan signed up with General Electric. He contracted not only to introduce the weekly General Electric Theater and appear in some of its presentations, but also to tour the country for ten weeks each year on behalf of the firm. As a pitchman for G.E. he told the business audiences what they wanted to hear, and, as Lou Cannon has observed, "Reagan believes in what he says, and he wound up believing what he was saying."

On his speaking tour of G.E.'s 135 plants Reagan established a reputation as an unrestrained critic of the New Deal. His fulminations against the Tennessee Valley Authority proved to be an embarrassment. When it was pointed out that G.E. was doing a multimillion-dollar business with the T.V.A., Reagan's employer told him to pipe down, and when he persisted in preaching the conservative gospel, the firm canceled his program. His hostility to the T.V.A. cost him even more dearly in 1976, when he was locked in a close race with Gerald Ford for the Republican Presidential nomination. Asked what he thought of the idea of selling the T.V.A. to private industry, Reagan replied, "It would be something to look at." In his memoirs Gerald Ford wrote: " 'It would be something to look at'—my campaign aides seized upon that with glee. . . . The T.V.A. 'issue' turned things around for me in Tennessee, which I won by fewer than 2,200 votes."

In 1964 he delivered what to Reagan watchers became known as "the Speech," a calcification of all of the random thoughts he had been experimenting with for the past dozen years. Released from G.E.'s restraints, he felt free to take out after the T.V.A. without reservation, though that was an agency, he acknowledged, that was "considered above criticism, sacred as motherhood." He heaped abuse on Roosevelt-style programs in areas ranging from agriculture to social welfare. He concluded, as he would in 1980, with a "rendezvous with destiny" quotation from F.D.R., but where Roosevelt summoned the nation to set an example to the world by democratic social action, Reagan warned of the slippery slope into statist tyranny.

IN THE YEARS AFTER 1964, Reagan's attitude hardened, yet he continued to identify himself with F.D.R. In his 1980 Presidential campaign he made good use of his larder of Roosevelt quotations, not just in his acceptance address but throughout the year. His self-identification with Roosevelt served him in several ways. It associated him with the last President historians have placed in the "great" category. It permitted him to leap over comparison to more recent predecessors such as Nixon or to ideologues such as Goldwater which would have been awkward. It suggested that, like F.D.R., Reagan would inaugurate a new era, construct an enduring political coalition, contribute an imaginative domestic agenda, and originate a foreign policy that would reshape the world. And it reassured those of his Democratic followers who continued to have warm memories of the Roosevelt of their youth.

Reagan presented himself as Rooseveltian, however, not in order to perpetuate F.D.R.'s political tradition but for exactly the opposite purpose: to dismantle the Roosevelt coalition. "Reagan is like Roosevelt, the activist who restored hope after Hoover's failure to overcome the Depression," said Congressman Jack F. Kemp. "But Reagan's activism is in the private sector, rather than in spending public funds as F.D.R. did." Like Roosevelt, Kemp declared, Reagan would create a new majority party by adding to the Republican core disaffected independents and blue-collar Democrats.

The press never wearied of analogizing the experiences of the two Presidents. Under the headline "F.D. Reagan calls America to his side," the *New York Daily News* reported that the new President had delivered an economic message "in a style reminiscent of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's fireside chats," and *Newsweek* featured the same program under the banner "R.W.R.'s Own New Deal," though "R.W.R.," patently an imitation of "F.D.R.," never caught on. By 1982 commentators had become so carried away as to suggest that Reagan's assault on liberal programs actually served to safeguard Roosevelt's policies. "Folks laughed in 1980 when Reagan invoked F.D.R.'s name," wrote George Will, "but in 1981 he began doing for the welfare state what F.D.R. did for capitalism: saving it by tempering its excesses." Lou Cannon took this idea still further. "Reagan may turn out to be the salvation of the New Deal much as his idol Franklin Roosevelt proved the savior of capitalism. He was a conservative, but one who was conserving the New Deal. Like Roosevelt, he

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saw himself as a force of history. Like Roosevelt, he was anathema to those whom his policies ultimately benefited most."

But a number of scholars denied that Reagan had any right to claim descent from Roosevelt. Yes, said Robert Lekachman, Reagan's program was just like Roosevelt's New Deal, "with the trifling difference that F.D.R. sought to alleviate poverty and Ronald Reagan enthusiastically enriches further the already obscenely rich." Similarly, historian Robert McElvaine commented, "More ludicrous than talk of similarities to the Depression are comparisons of Mr. Reagan and Franklin D. Roosevelt. F.D.R.'s supporters rode in freight cars, Mr. Reagan's travel in Lear jets; F.D.R.'s people stood in soup lines, Mr. Reagan's stand at cocktail parties; F.D.R.'s backers sold apples on street corners, Mr. Reagan's are more likely to sell real estate in Orange County, California." Indeed, not a few critics suggested that Reagan resembled Roosevelt less than F.D.R.'s ill-remembered adversary. When in February 1982 Reagan arrived in Minneapolis for the first Republican rally of the new year, he was greeted by a placard proclaiming "Welcome President Hoover" as hundreds of demonstrators turned out in subzero cold, while in Lafayette Park, across from the White House, protesters set up a tent city of homeless people which they named Reaganville to evoke memories of the Hoovervilles of the Great Depression. "In one sense, the President has truly become Franklin Delano Reagan," *The New York Times* asserted early in 1982. "Knight of the balanced budget, archenemy of federal borrowing, he is now the premier deficit spender of all time." In another sense, though, it said, "the President has become Ronald Hoover," for he was seeking to turn back the clock to a day when the problems of the nation's economy were not dealt with by the federal government but were balkanized by being dumped on the states.

A MONTH after the Minneapolis demonstration, in an address to the annual convention of Americans for Democratic Action, Representative Barbara Mikulski of Maryland reflected the growing resentment of Reagan's claim to be faithful to the memory of Roosevelt. "What a far cry," she said, were F.D.R.'s humane concerns from "a President who believes in coddling the wealthy and condemning the poor." Noting that the First Lady wore "$1,000 designer gowns when welfare families are only allowed $1,000 for all they have in the world," she etched a caricature of "Mrs. Reagan in her gown, and her china, and her hairdo that never seems to move. . . . The contrast to Eleanor Roosevelt is poignant and sad."

If such comments sounded strident, it is because liberal Democrats were coming to a most unwelcome conclusion: Reagan was getting away with it. It did not matter that there was a wealth of evidence demonstrating that the 1980 election was not a rejection of the New Deal. It did not matter that there was even more proof that Reagan had turned away from Roosevelt's ideas a full generation before. It did not even matter that before the eyes of the entire nation Reagan was approaching modern-day problems in the spirit of F.D.R.'s one-time enemies. Despite all of this, Reagan had persuaded a significant sector of opinion that in style, and even in substance, he was a latter-day Franklin Roosevelt. So contrary was this notion to reality that one might register it as the greatest sleight-of-hand of modern American politics, save for one thing. No one believed it more sincerely than Ronald Reagan.

JANUARY 20, 1982, marked the centennial of Franklin D. Roosevelt's birth, and Ronald Reagan did not intend to let the day go by without paying tribute to F.D.R. in the grand manner. When the celebrants arrived at the White House and filed into lunch to the fox-trot beat of a red-coated Marine band, they walked into a brilliantly lit room where each table was beautifully set with White House china, bouquets of tulips gracing every table. Nor had the President stinted on the meal: lobster bisque, supreme of chicken véronique with wild rice, a praline ice cream mold surmounted by an American eagle, all accompanied by a Château St.-Jean Chardonnay 1980. Gathered there were people who had served under the shadow cast by F.D.R. in every Administration from Truman through Carter. None, though, showed more enthusiasm for Roosevelt's natal day than the President of the United States.

Into a room buzzing with talk of earlier times strode the President, handsome, red-cheeked, smiling radiantly. F.D.R., Reagan declared, was "one of the history's truly monumental figures," "an American giant, a leader who shaped, inspired, and led our people in perilous times." He adroitly linked himself to his predecessor by quoting Walter Lippmann's notorious 1932 sentence about F.D.R.'s being a pleasant fellow with no conspicuous qualifications for the office, and then saying, "I think I have been hearing an echo," a remark that drew good-natured laughter from the Roosevelt partisans. He went on to repeat the comment of the one member remaining from the Hundred Days Congress of 1933, Jennings Randolph of West Virginia, who had said that F.D.R. made everyone feel "I count." At the end of his gracious remarks the President raised his glass in a toast, and as everyone in the room rose he said, "Happy days, now, again, and always."

Six months later Reagan brought his allegiance to F.D.R. to a climax, or anticlimax. In July 1982 he signed into law an authorization for a garden wall monument to F.D.R. to be built in the Tidal Basin. Thus the long-frustrated campaign to give Roosevelt a fitting memorial, an effort that had failed under every Democratic President, that the Carter Administration had flatly rejected, was carried to fruition by this paladin of the Republican right. On the following day newspapers carried detailed descriptions of how the well-designed memorial park would appear. Only one thing wrong. Not a penny was to be appropriated for the project that year, nor could anyone foresee when the money would come. No expression of the baffling, labyrinthine relationship of Ronald Reagan and Franklin Roosevelt could have been more fitting.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Double Exposures

James Toback was interviewed recently about his new film *Exposed* and said, "Anyone in the world who finances movies turned it down because it wasn't like any other movie." Could he have been talking about a completely different script? I'd have thought that the chief reason for not financing *Exposed* was that it was like so many others. Toback says that he finally got the money because Nastassia Kinski wanted to do it and stuck with him through all the hassling. Well, they deserve each other—and *Exposed*.

Exposed
(MGM/UA)

La Traviata
(Universal Classic)

Trailing clouds of nonglory does he come, this Toback, behind him the flatulent writing of *The Gambler*, the similar writing and direction of *Fingers* and *Love and Money*. We are assailed by many kinds of bad filmmakers, but Toback is one of the most irritating types: like the somewhat better Paul Mazursky, he thinks he brings class and intellect to a lowbrow medium because he has read a little and makes a few references, direct or otherwise, to his reading. In *Exposed* Toback refers to Goethe and quotes Leslie Fiedler on Goethe. (And quotes in his own person. Toback himself plays an English professor, with acting ability that matches his directing.) Since this happens early in the picture, it's meant to be a gold star on the picture that follows. But what we get after this high-toned opening is the most common of attempts to be novel: an international thriller about a New York fashion model who gets involved with musicians and terrorists, with plots of Holocaust vengeance and revolutionary agony. If you tossed *Diva* and *Marathon Man* and *Smiley's People* and *Funny Face* and a few others into a blender, you'd probably throw away the result. Toback saves it—and gives us *Exposed*.

Kinski, like Audrey Hepburn in *Funny Face*, is accidentally launched on a career as a high-fashion model and is seen in a lot of Avedon-Penn shots. Unlike Hepburn, she takes herself very seriously as a sex bomb. Toback allows her a long solo (is this why she wanted to do the film?) just disco-dancing around her Manhattan loft, which is much less overwhelming than he and she think it is. She plays an escapee from a university (where she was her English professor's girlfriend) and from her Minnesota farm family. To "explain" her foreignness, Toback gives her an English father and a Swedish mother (poor Bibi Andersson) who of course, in looks and accent, explain Kinski not at all. In New York City, while working as a waitress, she is spotted by a big photographer, and takes off.

Soon a handsome stranger—Rudolf Nureyev, making his attractive self foolish in a stupid part—plagues her with sudden appearances and disappearances, with sententious utterances. She succumbs. He turns out to be a famous violinist, and something more. The "something more," which is highly dangerous, Kinski discovers in his apartment by peering in a half-opened desk drawer where she sees a gun and some papers. It's blatantly incredible either that a) this man would have left that drawer open by mistake or b) he could have counted on her to snoop and thus involve herself.

The film moves to Paris where it had in fact opened, with a scene that contained a well-telegraphed surprise. The French cinematographer Henri Decae does his best to give us a new aspect or two of Paris, but his best shots in the film are his outdoor views of a snowbound Minnesota farm. At one point in Paris, Toback and Decae steal a leaf from the "impromptu" Godard book. Kinski slips and falls while hurrying across the street in front of the opera: the gaffe is retained.

All that *Exposed* really exposes has been exposed before: Toback is a mediocrity whose pretentiousness makes him handle trite material much less deftly than those poor old film professionals who don't even quote Leslie Fielder.

And then, as if the week weren't bad enough, there is Franco Zeffirelli. Early in his career, when he restricted himself to designing, Zeffirelli did some startling work. When he began to direct *and* design, not only was the directing flashy but the designing became precious. Among the gilt-paper stars in his filmic crown: *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Brother Sun, Sister Moon* (a picture about Francis of Assisi for which only the saint could forgive him), and *The Champ*. Now for the second time he turns to opera (he did *La Bohème* in 1965) and swoons over *La Traviata*.

I see no point in comparison with such recent gems of opera-film as Bergman's *The Magic Flute* and Syberberg's *Parsifal*. Losey's *Don Giovanni*, poor as it is, is enough to make this *Traviata* look like the fantasies of a hyped-up interior

FILMS WORTH SEEING

The Draughtsman's Contract. Written and directed by Peter Greenaway, this Restoration comedy of intrigue turns into something deadlier. Elegant and diabolically delightful.

Monty Python's The Meaning of Life. Six of the wittiest men alive show that they are also six of the angriest—at human failings. (Including, implicitly, their own.)

The Return of Martin Guerre. Sixteenth-century France. A factual story about a farmer who comes home after eight years and may be an impostor. Fair story, well acted, superbly realized in period feeling.

Tender Mercies. Strong, quiet religious allegory. A Texas singer-composer—Robert Duvall, first-class—hits the alcoholic skids, then comes back just as far as he chooses. Fine work.

SK

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decorator with a never-failing checkbook. There are excellent costumes, done by Piero Tosi, who worked so often for Visconti, but Zeffirelli has done the décor and has achieved a sort of disastrous miracle: he has managed to make everything—salon, boudoir, Paris streets, countryside—look as if it were manufactured of velour. And he has directed with velour swirlings of the camera, so much swooping and whirling that occasionally one feels more nauseated than angry. In the field of conventional opera-film direction—as against the Bergman-Syberberg level—this is not only sub-Losey, it's not as good as the Viennese film of *Die Fledermaus* that PBS broadcasts every New Year's Eve.

JAMES LEVINE conducted, leading the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, with much vigor and less tenderness. (Admittedly, the volume was too high at the screening I attended, still such phrases as the second theme in the prelude to Act Three sounded coarse.) Teresa Stratas, the Violetta, has an edge of stridency in her voice and more derangement than despair in her acting. Placido Domingo sings well and acts adequately, but the camera makes him look more like Germont *père* than *fils*. Père is actually played and sung by Cornell MacNeil who, as actor and singer, is Mr. Dull.

Bits of the score have been repeated at different places to cover camera action, and a sizable chunk of the opening of Act Three has been cut. But the fundamental error in Zeffirelli's approach is that it nullifies Verdi's intent. Verdi wrote his opera (with incredible speed—the première took place thirteen months after the première of its source, Dumas's *La Dame aux camèlias*) as a daring, modern work. The Venice première in March of 1853 was a complete failure, partly because of poor casting, but, says Francis Toye: "There were . . . contributory causes, notably the contemporary action and the contemporary dresses, an unheard-of innovation in serious opera. . . ." When *La Traviata* was produced a year later with a better cast and with Louis XIII costumes—apparently to mitigate its scandalous pertinence—it was a success; nonetheless, says Toye, "*La Traviata* became the symbol of revolt against current sexual conventions."

No production today could possibly capture that anticonventional shock, of course, but Zeffirelli's upholstery of decorative and directorial lushness makes absolutely sure to convert the work from serious romance to romance in the cheapest sense. A nonexhibitionistic director might have understood that Marguerite/Violetta was a heroine to her authors, not a crumpling swatch of taffeta, and might have addressed his film to her defiance of conventions and her defeat by them. Zeffirelli prefers (Lewis Carroll's phrase) fainting in coils.

Postscript. Several readers have written, apropos of my review of *The Return of Martin Guerre* four weeks ago, to note that Janet Lewis used the same historical material for her novel *The Wife of Martin Guerre*, as did William Bergsma for his opera of the same name.

SOLDIER, SCHOLAR, STATESMAN, HE

The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill, Visions of Glory, 1874-1932
by William Manchester

(Little Brown, 883 pp., $25)

In the first volume (1933) of his six-volume biography of John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, Winston Churchill wrote these words:

> It is said that famous men are usually the product of unhappy childhood. The stern compression of circumstance, the spur of slights and taunts in early years, are needed to evoke that ruthless fixity of purpose and tenacious mother-wit, without which great actions are seldom accomplished.

Whether John Churchill had such a childhood is a matter of speculation. It is a matter of fact that Lord Randolph Churchill, Winston's brilliant father, and his beautiful American mother, née Jennie Jerome, shamelessly—and in his father's case cruelly and with insults—neglected him in his early years. Had this incorrigible egotist opened his life of John Churchill with a portrait not of John but of Winston?

In his preparatory school, run *in loco parentis* by one of those sadistic clergymen who so strangely abound in Victorian social history, Winston Churchill was whipped until he bled for his refusal to obey the rules. At Harrow, his public school, he deliberately behaved like a dunce in every area of education except English composition. Winston adored his mother at a distance and idealized his father at an even greater one, and it would seem that the inner hostility that he repressed in his parents' case was turned upon outer authority. Only at the Royal Academy at Sandhurst did he begin to abide by the rules.

How often do we find such terms as "schoolboyish" applied to him in later life! Impatient, excitable, pugnacious, bossy, and bumptious—these traits, among others far more admirable, never left him. H. G. Wells once remarked of him: "There are times when . . . I can only think of him as a little boy, a mischievous, dangerous little boy"; and indeed there are episodes throughout his mature life, when one is tempted to say of the experienced statesman and politician that he was too young to know better.

There is a formidable giantism about the Churchillian record. A master of English prose, he used his splendid gift like a slave driver; the list of his books and articles is huge, and much of it was written, as he put it, "from mouth to hand"—in periods of political eclipse, when he had no other source of income with which to support his wife and children.

Churchill once wrote that his favorite French maxim was: "*L'art d'être ennuyeux, c'est de tout dire.*" (The art of being a bore is to say everything.) It did not, in fact, much bother him. Of his *Marlborough* one might well reverse the Latin saw and say *Vita longa, ars brevis*: for in spite of such splendid interludes as its account of the Battle of Blenheim, it drags out its huge length in an unmethodical and wearisome fashion. The four-volume *The World Crisis* (1923-27), on the other hand, is a literary and his-

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torical masterpiece, perhaps more literary than historical.

Churchill has always been a writer's lodestone. The literature about him, in all shapes and sizes, from Keynes's *The Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill* to the five-volume authorized biography by (the late) Randolph Churchill and Martin Gilbert, is also enormous; and it is not surprising that the newest biography by William Manchester should be 883 pages long. Part scholarly, part gossipy, it ransacks as it were both the attics and the archives of history, and is apt to overwhelm us by sheer weight. But it is certainly a welcome and well-written complement to the more staid work of Martin Gilbert. Moreover, although Manchester was for a while a friend of Churchill and his family, it is not in any too obvious sense apologetic.

Although the book's period is 1874 to 1932, Manchester opens it briefly and correctly with the year 1940. On May 13, Churchill was appointed Prime Minister in the place of Neville Chamberlain, much to the dismay of that quintessential clubman King George VI, who would have preferred Lord Halifax. Halifax, along with others in the Tory establishment, was ready to come to a "favorable" negotiation with Hitler, in which case the history of the Western world, already black with Nazi crime, would have been even more hideously defaced. On that day Churchill offered nothing but "blood, toil, tears and sweat," and on June 4, speaking again to the Commons and the people, he defied the expected Nazi invasion in words that repetition cannot stale, and which ran in part:

> We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. . . . We shall defend our island whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender.

It has been said of Churchill that his two loves were war and the English language: here they come together. He was no warmonger. Warfare to him was one of the verities, perhaps *the* verity. But the wonderful words quoted above uneasily remind us, whether we like it or not, that hostility had lain deep in his soul since childhood; that physical danger had always given him an intense and needed thrill; and that hyperactivity of one kind or another was part of a complex defense against his "Black Dog"—the dark depression that haunted him all his life.

He left Sandhurst in 1894, passing out a creditable eighth in a class of 150. In 1895, his father died of paresis, leaving him an aristocratic name, which counted for much in those days, a brilliant if wayward political reputation, and a mother who was not only a successful society hostess, but a woman who had managed her several love affairs—one of them with that Ganesh-like figure, Albert Edward Prince of Wales—with a tact that earned her the silent approbation of the circles in which she moved.

Churchill at twenty was about five and a half feet tall, with a large head, puny limbs, sandy hair, pale blue eyes, and a slight lisp—hardly a prepossessing figure, but witty, engaging, and wildly ambitious. Lady Randolph now found him "interesting," and it was family influence that had much to do with the adventures which he describes, with incomparable verve, in *My Early Life* (1930). How else could a mere subaltern in the Fourth Hussars have been given the opportunity to ride under fire with a Spanish column in rebellious Cuba, to join the Malakand Field Force that quelled the Pathans on the northwest frontier of India, or to infiltrate Kitchener's Sudan expedition (much against that paladin's will) as a would-be war correspondent attached to the Twenty-first Lancers? In every case his life was in danger, which he seemed almost to crave. In this respect Manchester tells us a singularly revealing story, one of the most revealing in the whole book. It concerns Churchill's experiences as a 22-year-old subaltern with the Malakand Field Force. "There could be no doubt," Manchester writes,

> He was remarkably brave, at times even rash. . . . Like Nelson, he freely admitted that he was chiefly driven, not by patriotism, but by ambition. He wrote Jennie: 'I rode my grey pony all along the skirmish line where everyone else was lying down in cover. Foolish perhaps but I play for high stakes and given an audience there is no act too daring or too noble. Without the gallery things are different.' This, he was convinced, was advancing him another step toward the House of Commons.

Here we discern one of the dominant occupations of a lifetime—the careful grooming of a spirited public image on the platform, in Parliament, in print.

Between expeditions, he managed to devour the works of Gibbon and Macaulay, especially Gibbon—though he never developed (*pace* Evelyn Waugh) a "pseudo-Augustan" style, but one essentially his own. When his letters to the press were favorably received, he resigned from the army. He then became the *Morning Post's* correspondent in the Boer War, was captured by and escaped from the Boers, and returned home a sort of hero.

It is in *My Early Life*, too, that one learns something of the first importance. There the year 1896, when he first showed himself in London society, appears also as the apogee of the British Empire. The few hundred great families that had governed and misgoverned England for so long were still firmly in the saddle; the Boer War still waited in the wings. The Churchills had not done much between the great first Duke and the brilliant Lord Randolph, but they had relations everywhere in that exclusive world. It was then that Churchill experienced an almost Talleyrandish *douceur de vivre;* it was from out of that past that he created what Isaiah Berlin has called his "inner world," the romantic past from which he drew his energy and which fed his imagination. In other words, in spite of his later leaning toward social reforms and technological innovations, he remained at heart a late Victorian, the lively denizen of a glorious, privileged, and defunct England.

SONG FROM THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

The dawn takes twenty thousand years
To creep up to my windowsill.
I had two pills to calm my fears,
And for my pain the usual.

Terror, shame, who seeks you out
At the four corners of my room?
The razor teeth of what small mouth
Begin to nibble at my name?

HOWARD MOSS

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After his return from the Boer War, he was elected to Parliament as a staunch Conservative, became (like his idealized father whom he longed to revenge) something of a thorn in the side of his party's leaders, and then took the questionable step of defecting to the Liberals, on the issue of Free Trade, just in time for the election of 1906, which turned out to be a Liberal landslide.

Nor were the Liberals unkind to this energetic and brilliant turncoat, who had already shown himself to be a natural parliamentarian. A safe seat in Parliament, colonial under secretary, president of the Board of Trade, home secretary, first lord of the Admiralty—such was the ladder he climbed in those tumultuous years, years that mark either the high noon of reforming Liberalism or else its death throes, depending upon how you look at them.

He was, of course, elated at the onset of World War I. Like almost everyone else, Churchill hoped that it would last for a month or two of derring-do. But when it turned into a senseless slaughter on the Western Front, he, like Lloyd George, hoped to relieve the pressure on the West by opening up a new front in the East.

It was the monolithic Lord Kitchener at the War Office who first suggested the Dardanelles, but it was Churchill at the Admiralty who gave this strategic concept the necessary momentum. And what a splendid concept it was! As Martin Gilbert has written, if the battleships could blast their way through the Narrows, and then on to Constantinople, what vistas opened—"relief for Russia, encouragement for India, salvation for Serbia, doom for Austria-Hungary, isolation for Germany . . . and [Churchill's] pushing, his petulence, his ambition, his youth, would be vindicated." Hindsight, with its usual irritating complacency, informs us that only a combined military and naval operation, a simultaneous invasion of the Gallipoli peninsula and forcing of the Narrows could—and almost certainly would—have produced this marvelous result. But somehow the Gallipoli venture is unbearably iffy, leading us into that seductive world that historians and biographers enter at their peril—the world that runs its affairs entirely in the conditional mood.

In the event, Churchill, all impatience, decreed that the battleships should go it alone, and on March 18 Admiral de Robeck, having lost three of his capital ships through mines, refused to push his advantage home with a second try. *If* he had skirted the mine field, now discoverable on his right; *if* he had employed more efficient minesweepers; *if* the fleet had reached Constantinople—could it alone have subdued the city?

CHURCHILL IN HIS FIRST, UNSUCCESSFUL, CAMPAIGN FOR PARLIAMENT. COURTESY OF TIME INC. PICTURE COLLECTION.

One month later the soldiers began their invasion. They were insufficient in numbers at the front, indecisively managed by headquarters in the rear, and incompetently led—notably at Suvla Bay—by the corps commanders on the spot. The gallantry of the troops has become a legend; the invasion only ended in a horrible slaughter on the beaches and in the hills. Long before the end, Churchill was obliged to resign. A divided command in Gallipoli, an indecisive Asquithian War Council at home, his subordinate position, the treachery of Lord Fisher, whom he brought out of retirement to be first sea lord in 1914, and who became a sort of tutelary goblin, irreplaceable but ruinous—all this brought about his fall. It was the turning point in his career, for although he rejoined Lloyd George's wartime coalition in 1917, the Dardanelles had given him a reputation for bloodthirstiness and instability that he never shook off.

What amounted to a second career began while he was still Secretary for War and Air in Lloyd George's national government. One might call it the Indian summer of a late Victorian. Having conceived a hatred and contempt for bolshevism, he pressed the savage, reactionary cause of Deniken and White Russia day in and day out upon the Cabinet. He then turned his ill feeling upon English socialism, and when Lloyd George's government fell in 1922, he began those two careful antisocialist steps, running first as an Independent and then as a Constitutionalist, which were to lead him back into the Conservative fold. In 1925, he joined Stanley Baldwin's government as chancellor of the Exchequer, and at the Exchequer he engineered the return to the gold standard, an attempt to restore the pound to its Victorian glory, but one which, since it effectively devalued other European currencies, dealt a severe blow to English exports. He remained at the Exchequer until 1929, years otherwise distinguished by his furious overreaction to the General Strike of 1926, and by his bitter opposition to anything resembling Indian self-rule.

In his early days he had been known to display the crude kind of Victorian imperialism that lies, to take an obvious example, so close to the surface of Kipling's "humble and contrite" *Recessional*; and his later imperialism was crude-

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ness itself. An aging counterrevolutionary, he seemed to have entrenched himself in the last century. He expected the Indians, in return for such benefits as dams and famine relief, gratefully to admit that they were an inferior order of mankind; Gandhi was for him merely a "half naked fakir." This extreme intransigence lost him, after Baldwin's defeat in 1929, even his place in the Conservative "shadow cabinet," even the usual respect of his beloved House of Commons. Manchester's book leaves him in a political wilderness—a statesman who, according to that virago Lady Astor, in an interview with Stalin, had no future at all.

Manchester's book has some solecisms—such as calling Lord Alfred Douglas a "peer," or changing the Duke of Westminster's heraldic nickname from "Bendor" to "Bender"—rather weird mistakes for such a close student of the English upper classes. In examining the postwar disillusion that came over England in the 1920s, its feeling of having been betrayed by the previous generation, he calls Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* "sardonic," which it conspicuously was not. He does not see, as for example Stephen Roskill does, that "the Navy was ready" is not entirely accurate for August 1914. He does not mention the fact that, by going over the heads of his professional advisers at the Admiralty and sending an obfuscating message to Admiral Milne, Churchill was responsible for the escape of the *Goeben* from Messina to Constantinople in 1914, a crucial mistake. He does not mention that Churchill rejected the Pollen system for accurate aiming by a rolling ship at high speed—a system that would have changed the indecisive outcome of the Battle of Jutland. He seems to believe that the Irish were conscripted in World War I and "deserted in droves," whereas Irish conscription (which Churchill urged upon a full Cabinet on April 6, 1918 and which would certainly have been disastrous) never took place at all, due to the masterly procrastination of David Lloyd George.

None of this alters the fact that Manchester has written a highly readable and informative book, seasoned now and then with a pleasantly epigrammatic turn of phrase. It leaves us nonetheless in some doubt as to whether in the future, always supposing there is one, when Churchill has passed altogether from living memory, his accomplishments narrated here will, with the great exception of 1940, be considered quite as important as the prose in which he himself has clothed so many of them.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

George Dangerfield, whose *The Era of Good Feelings* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich) won the Pulitzer Prize, is the author most recently of *The Damnable Question: A Study in Anglo-Irish Relations* (Atlantic-Little, Brown).

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WHY WE LOST THE WAR

On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War by Colonel Harry G. Summers Jr.

(Presidio Press, 225 pp., $12.95)

This book, written by a member of the faculty of the U.S. Army War College, is a penetrating analysis of our strategy during the Vietnam War. Colonel Summers explains how the United States allowed a "tenth-rate power" that never managed a single, significant battlefield victory to humiliate it militarily and provoke bitter domestic discontent. In a device characteristic of his reflective approach and the broad scale of his thinking, he measures our conduct of the Vietnam War against the tactical and strategic precepts of Clausewitz's *On War* and shows how we broke every important rule in that book.

Summers begins by rejecting the conventional view that we failed in Vietnam because the national will collapsed. At the very beginning, he argues, Lyndon Johnson consciously decided against mobilizing that will behind the war effort. He was afraid that domestic conservatives would use the war fervor to divert attention from, and so destroy, his Great Society, so he tried both to preserve his reforms and sneak by a limited war. He did what Roosevelt could not have done and, like Truman before him, slipped the Congressional safeguard, committing American soldiers to battle without a formal declaration of war. That the two Presidents could do this resulted partly from America's new position in the world after 1945, and partly from the changed relationship between army and executive on the one hand, and army and people, on the other.

As Summers sees it, our postwar policy of containment and the perception that future wars would be short-lived combined to inject a new peacetime institution into American foreign policy: a large, standing army. Designed to help us respond immediately to threats to our security, it meant that prior mobilization was no longer necessary for prolonged military action. Truman simply ordered the army into Korea in June, 1950, as Johnson ordered it into Vietnam in August, 1964. In the interval, a blurring of the distinction between war and peace eased our slide into a full

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scale war in Southeast Asia without the Congressional declaration that would have made us face what we were doing and would have required the people's commitment to pass.

Of course, the 88 Senators and the 416 Representatives who voted for the Gulf of Tonkin resolution in August 1964 did not envisage a ten-year war and a massive commitment of ground troops to Vietnam. They were approving the use of U.S. air power and the use of enough troops to protect the bases from which that power would be deployed against the North Vietnamese. Summers argues that when, in the spring of 1965, it had become clear that the enemy was not about to give up, Johnson should have sought a Congressional declaration of war and the people's imprimatur that a declaration would have signaled. Fearing a domestic rebuff, and perhaps also that he would provoke Chinese intervention, Johnson chose rather to continue as he had begun. He gradually escalated the conflict, thereby committing the armed forces to a land war for which there was no popular enthusiasm. He therefore deprived himself of the option of calling out the reserves, a fatal restriction, Summers believes, on how the war could be fought.

Unauthorized use of the armed forces eventually had the disastrous effect of turning a substantial segment of the American public against its own, largely conscripted army, as the Founding Fathers anticipated it might. Though Summers does not say so, this alienation was also possible because of the substantial social gap between the war's most vocal critics, most of whom did not serve, and the majority of those who did. He does show how policy without consensus led the public to assume that the executors of policy, i.e., the armed forces, were at one with the makers of policy. Antiwar activists could portray the army as wicked for not heeding the dictates of conscience and refusing to fight in Vietnam. In venting their spleen against the military, Summers believes, the protestors were absurdly wide of the mark. Rarely has a war been so overwhelmingly conceived and directed by civilian authority.

In Colonel Summers's view, the United States fared so poorly in Vietnam precisely because the civilian policymakers failed to consult their military advisers. He is not entirely consistent on this point, however, for there are times in his monograph when the policies for which he faults the civilian administrators issue from his generals' lips. Certainly, though, the author believes that serious strategic thinking in the Pentagon was on the wane. Advocacy of massive nuclear retaliation had ceded place to the concepts of limited warfare and flexible response that kept the army from being written off as obsolete. The staggering cost of army and arsenal together nevertheless meant that Administrations were placing increasing emphasis on the economic, managerial, and technical aspects of defense planning, to the detriment of strategic policy. Summers demonstrates how this shift in emphasis eventually transformed the nature of the defense bureaucracy itself as economists, systems analysts, and technicians elbowed aside the professional military strategists or joined arms with those in the military who were willing to learn the new jargon and play by the new rules. The process reached its apogee under Defense Secretary McNamara with his Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (P.P.B.S.). Summers sees McNamara as the archetype of the quantitative theoretician with little sense of what war is about. The Johnson Administration had its political scientists who could expatiate on the "why" of war and its systems analysts who could advise on the "what." It had lost touch, however, with the military strategist who alone could address the "how."

This breakdown in communication between civilian policymakers and their military advisers occurred at the highest level. Johnson seemed proud of his distrust of the military so that he naturally lacked the close association with his Chiefs of Staff that had served Roosevelt well. Between 1965 and 1968 the only member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff seen by the President on a regular basis was the chairman and almost never in private. In the crucial twelve months after June 1965 when large numbers of our ground troops were being committed to Vietnam, Johnson saw the Chief of Staff of the Army only twice.

Summers tries to show how the two very basic errors that doomed our war effort arose simply from faulty strategic thinking. First, we mistook the war in Vietnam for a war of national liberation when, in fact, it was one of external aggression. Accordingly, we expended

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our limited commitment on the Viet Cong, which we need not have done. Second, we were unwilling to do what was necessary to defeat or at least contain the real enemy—the North Vietnamese.

By the summer of 1964 we had for some time been expecting the wars of national liberation that Khrushchev had threatened early in 1961. Kennedy had returned from Vienna that year insisting that the military develop its skills in counterinsurgency. The President's passion duly became army dogma. Summers quotes the 1954 edition of our *Field Service Manual* as evidence that we still understood the army's role to be "to defeat an enemy by the application of military power directly or indirectly against the armed forces which support his political structure." By 1965 we had rewritten our own rulebook in an ominously grandiose style: the new manual announced that the army could "preserve, restore or create an environment of order or stability within which the instrumentalities of government can function effectively under a code of laws." In Southeast Asia the new doctrine became a self-fulfilling prophecy, a false idea whose time had come. It was designed for "People's Wars" and Summers shows that some of the military followed the policymakers in reading the conflict in these terms, quoting General Westmoreland's statement that the Communists were waging a "classic revolutionary war." Westmoreland was hardly alone in confusing revolutionary warfare, which seeks to achieve an end of its own, with guerrilla warfare which, according to Sir Robert Thompson, aims only to harass and distract an enemy so that regular forces can more easily win conventional battles. We failed to see that the Viet Cong's activities were diversionary so that victory against them would not bring strategic victory. That is why our significant defeat of the Viet Cong in the Tet Offensive of 1968, which reduced them to no more than 20 percent of the Communist fighting force, brought us no closer to ending the conflict. Summers regards the decision not to entrust the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (A.R.V.N.) from the very beginning with South Vietnam's internal security as doubly wrong. It not only necessitated the search-and-destroy operations that, more than anything else we did, outraged American moral sensibilities; it was also totally unnecessary, since Summers is convinced that A.R.V.N. could have done the job itself. When it was allowed to fight in place with American support, as in the Eastertide Offensive in 1972, the South Vietnamese army performed well and bravely. In assuming the task they should have performed, we involved ourselves unnecessarily in an enervating, demoralizing activity, casting ourselves in the role not so much of the world's policeman but of its nanny, as Summers puts it.

Our second basic error was to follow up the U.S. First Cavalry Division's defeat of the North Vietnamese army in November, 1965, with an "offensive" strategy that was in truth defensive. We limited our attacks on the north to bombing and shelling, thinking in Clausewitz's phrase, "to outlast the enemy by wearing him down." But Clausewitz classes this technique as offensive strategy only when the user has time on his side. In this case, time was not on ours. In fact, we had two possible strategic options and pursued neither.

FIRST, we might indeed have gone on to the strategic offensive by pursuing the North Vietnamese army across the DMZ. This we did not do-because we were afraid of provoking Chinese intervention. As a result we allowed our opponents a massive advantage: they could invade our ally's territory while their territory remained inviolable. Thus, the North Vietnamese Army, like the I.R.A. and, until recently, the P.L.O., could operate from a secure base with safe lines of communication to the frontier, behind which they could always retreat in order to escape destruction.

This option being closed, only one other sensible course remained to us. We ought consciously to have chosen the strategic defensive, fighting a Korean-style war of containment as General Westmoreland advised in April, 1967. Summers provides two reasons for our rejection of this possibility. First, such a strategy would have required at least a partial mobilization of the reserves, which Johnson could not accept. Second, we had learned the wrong lessons from Korea. Our experience there made us vow never again to risk involvement in an Asian land war with Communist China. China's entry had forced us to contract our ambitions. We had initially intended to destroy North Korea's armed forces and unite the peninsula under a democratic government. Once the Chinese had joined in, we struggled merely to restore the situation before the North Korean attack. With 20/20 hindsight we can see that a Korean-type resolution in Vietnam would have been infinitely preferable to our precipitate withdrawal. We should have learned from Korea that, if absolutely necessary, we could fight and win a limited war against China. But, Summers believes, the half-full goblet for which we would gladly have settled in 1975 appeared half and unacceptably empty in 1964 because we were viewing it against the background of our total victories in World War II. This interpretation is sound enough, but Summers does not stick to it consistently. Elsewhere, he argues that when we, without realizing it, went on to the strategic defensive in the late autumn of 1965, we did so in pursuit of an imprecise goal that certainly was not victory. He quotes Maxwell Taylor as saying in 1966 that we were not trying to defeat the North Vietnamese, but only "to cause them to mend their ways."

Our limited commitment and basic errors in strategic thinking found no reflection in the enemy's camp. For their attitudes, Summers quotes a book published in 1963 that refers to a secret document taken by the French in North Vietnam in the spring of 1952. The document revealed that the Vietnamese Communist leadership aimed to install Communist regimes in the whole of Vietnam, in Laos, and in Cambodia. As he traces the ebb and flow of the conflict, Summers points out a consistent pattern. Whenever our army succeeded in putting the North Vietnamese on the tactical defensive, our strategy would prevent it from exploiting the advantage and from containing incursions from the North. The North Vietnamese, on the other hand, despite meeting defeat whenever they tried a tactical offensive (in 1965, 1968, and 1972) still managed to maintain their overall strategic offensive because of their ability to wear us down (time *was* on their side) by supplementing and supplying the Viet Cong. Our army successfully did what was asked of it, yet strategic victory eluded us because the civilian planners' policy of slow escalation was not a strategy to win. Johnson doggedly followed that policy despite opposition from the military and every branch of the intelligence community, Summers says. He attributes the fact partly to his suspicion

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that Secretary McNamara may not have presented the opposition's arguments to the President, partly to Ambassador Maxwell Taylor's support of the policy. On March 10, 1975, after Nixon had made good his campaign pledge to withdraw from Vietnam, rendering us no longer a force to be reckoned with, the North Vietnamese succeeded on their fourth attempt. The government of South Vietnam surrendered on April 30.

"ONE OF THE most somber aspects of the study of history is that it suggests no obvious [sic] ways by which mankind could have avoided folly," writes Yale history professor Gaddis Smith. Is this a profound truth or the symptom of a lack of imagination? Summers, at least, does not stand on the side of the determinists. He sees errors, points out blinkered thinking, exposes willful self-deception, and approves clearsightedness and originality. He insists that real alternatives were available to those whose blunders contributed to the Vietnam debacle, and although he takes pains to show why mistakes were made, he rarely explains them away. His book demonstrates how our failure to include sophisticated strategic thinking in the formulation of our national policy led to the disaster that the word "Vietnam" evokes today. With Brigadier Shelford Bidwell (editor of the British military journal of the Royal United Services Institute), Summers believes that our defeat "could have been avoided by adopting the classical principle of war by cutting off the trouble at the root. If that was not politically realistic, then the war should not have been fought at all." It is difficult to dispute that verdict.

Some of the author's conclusions are less well based. He believes our military leaders knew better than the civilian policymakers who directed them, but that impossible conditions of service were thrust upon them: their warnings to the President of the likely consequences of his decisions went unheeded and their recommended alternatives were disregarded. Rather than allow themselves to be instruments in the army's downfall, Summers believes they should have resigned. This is a dangerous conclusion. Resignation may be warranted for moral reasons, as when the policies of the executive require morally abhorrent actions. The issue here, however, involves only strategy and tactics. On prudential or pragmatic grounds, such action among the J.C.S. would have tarnished the image of the armed services far more indelibly, and done the country more irreparable damage than was actually the case. Certainly such mass resignations would have been welcomed by those who were truly the army's enemy.

Summers is also critical of our efforts at counterinsurgency. His case might have been more persuasive had he described those operations in detail and evaluated the likely short-term effect of our ignoring the insurgents, especially if his assessment of A.R.V.N.'s competence had proved optimistic. Here and on the issue of resignation Summers, like most of us, does better at criticizing policies put into practice than at anticipating the difficulties of those untried.

This is not an easy book. It is dense, elliptical, and its thematic organization leads not only to frequent repetition but to occasional inconsistencies. Some have already been noted. There are others. For example, the Colonel quotes with approval an interesting strategic plan devised after the war by General Bruce Palmer (former commander of

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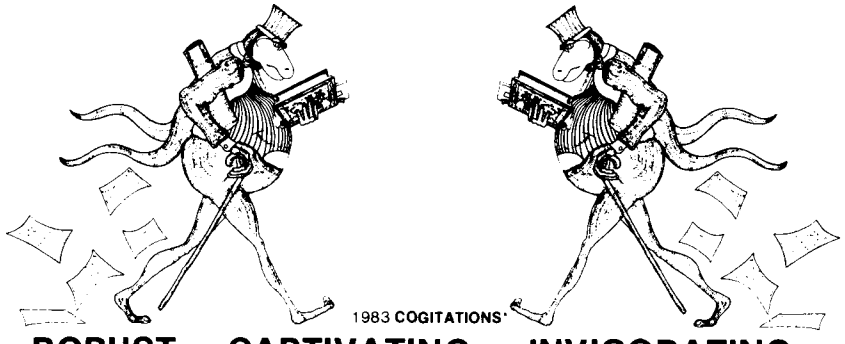

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the army in Vietnam) and presented at an Army War College seminar on May 31, 1977. It called for an expanded naval blockade, and the army's temporary assumption of the strategic offensive along the DMZ across Laos and the Thai border in order to isolate the battlefield. Palmer would then have had us deliberately assume both the strategic and tactical defensive to contain Communist aggression in the south. It is easy to see how this plan would appeal to Colonel Summers. Moreover it would have needed four fewer divisions than we actually deployed, would have resulted in substantially fewer casualties, and would not have required the mobilization of any reserves. But Summers earlier criticized President Johnson for getting us into the war in such a way as to preclude mobilization. He argued that the lack of this option helped to trap us in a no-win strategy. His criticism of the President for this cannot stand if he truly believes Palmer's contention that a Korean-style resolution was possible without reserve mobilization. If Palmer is right, responsibility for the no-win strategy shifts from Johnson to his military advisers who failed to see in 1967 what Palmer saw in 1977.

My summary of Summers's main points cannot do justice to the subtleties of argument and the richness of detail in this dispassionate, fair-minded, and insightful book. No one concerned with the future of American foreign policy can afford to ignore it.

ALVIN H. BERNSTEIN

Alvin H. Bernstein is an associate professor of history and chairman of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University. He is also an adjunct professor at the Defense Intelligence School and will be a visiting professor in the Strategy Department at the Naval War College for the 1982-83 academic year.

ADVISE AND DISSENT

Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981 by Zbigniew Brzezinski

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 587 pp., $22.50)

The office of the National Security Adviser has been until recently one of great and growing importance; those offered the job are not known to have suffered attacks of modesty prior to accepting it. Did they know what they were letting themselves in for? After an early meeting in a Washington club where the old elite was mingling with new, Brzezinski noted in his diary that "everybody is greeting me so warmly, so friendly, with such amity, as if one was a bosom pal of people one hardly knows. Hypocrisy seems to be the dominant style in personal relationships around here." Hypocrisy was a problem but not the only one: four years later there were few bosom pals left. The job is one of high risk and few rewards; the National Security Adviser is likely to make many enemies and few friends. There are almost unlimited opportunities to make mistakes and only one (sometimes none) to succeed.

Brzezinski's survey of four years in the White House covers all the major developments and events during the Carter Administration: relations with the Soviet Union and China, Camp David, the fall of the Shah, and negotiations with Europe. There are many fascinating sidelights and some hitherto unknown facts. As a sourcebook, *Power and Principle* is indispensable. But in broad outline, the foreign policy record of the Carter Administration involved few mysteries, and this book is unlikely to provoke a basic reassessment of the period.

It certainly does shed light on how decisions were made. Brzezinski is a shrewd observer, and the first sixty pages assessing the main dramatis personae are not only enlightening but entertaining. The author soon learned to differentiate between Carter's various smiles: the genial (outward) smile for public consumption; the smile that masked anger or even fury; the sly, relaxed smile, expressing the man at ease. Much of this book is about the relationship between National Security Adviser and President; with all his criticism, more often implied than stated, Brzezinski's respect for Carter did not weaken: "I never doubted that I was dealing with a shrewd, rather deliberate yet fundamentally decent and engaging person who combined high intelligence with occasionally surprising naiveté, genuine dedication to principle with sometimes excessive tactical flexibility." Brzezinski's relationship with Cyrus Vance was, to a large extent, a repeat performance of the Kissinger-Rogers tug of war, and while he won this battle (mainly, no doubt, because the Russians did not live up to Mr. Vance's high expectations), he did not come out of it unscathed. Brzezinski relates that he recommended Vance as Secretary of State to Carter (the other candidates were George Ball and Paul Warnke). But soon after, the reader is given to understand that Vance was neither a conceptualizer nor a communicator, that he tended to confuse diplomacy with foreign policy and always tended to be too soft toward America's enemies. All this may be quite true: why then did Brzezinski recommend him in the first place?

A large part of *Power and Principle* deals with bureaucratic infighting, which seems a fairly accurate reflection of the state of affairs. Within the Carter Administration an enormous amount of time, energy, and intrigue went into deliberations about who should lead a mission to China and other issues of even less consequence. There were certain legitimate disputes at the time that had to be thrashed out. But there was also far too much energy expended on efforts to coordinate the form as well as the substance of policy making. Carter wanted good team players but was not too successful with his choices, and there was something wrong with the very concept: major foreign political initiatives are not carried out by teams.

Brzezinski reprints his schedule for one day, September 19, 1978. He arrived at the office at 6:45 am and left it at 9:30 in the evening, had some thirty-four meetings in between, and then ruefully notes that "a typical day did not leave

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much time for reflection"—an understatement if there ever was one. The schedules of other top officials were no doubt similar, so it is perhaps a miracle that they did not commit even more mistakes than they actually did. Even a titan of superhuman stamina could not function in such conditions, being bogged down in routine work and unessential details. The recurring "administrative reforms" tended to make matters worse.

THE OFFICE of the National Security Adviser has gained in stature and importance over the past decade either because the President has lacked interest in foreign policy or because the Secretary of State has been picked for reasons other than all-round competence. But the President has remained, obviously, the ultimate arbiter, and the Secretary of State still has his turf to protect. Under these circumstances, the National Security Council can discreetly give advice and torpedo some of the less brilliant ideas emanating from the State Department or the Pentagon. But it cannot participate in major initiatives, let alone serve as an alternative center for the conduct of foreign or defense policy, except in unique circumstances (Nixon and Kissinger). Its very existence is bound to generate tension. Ideally both President and Secretary of State should be capable of dealing with the foreign policy problems at hand, in which case there may be no need for a National Security Adviser. The fact that such constellation is rare may well not matter much, because for a variety of reasons U.S. foreign policy currently seems to be incapable of undertaking major sustained foreign policy initiatives. If so, all the papers prepared by the N.S.C., policy planning staff, and other such bodies are of mainly academic interest.

Mr. Brzezinski's illuminating *tour d'horizon* seldom asks what went wrong and why, seldom suggests, with the benefit of hindsight, what should have been done differently. Such self-criticism is rare among those active in politics; perhaps, too, it's too early to provide definitive answers. But some obvious thoughts intrude: Brzezinski was intellectually better prepared than the other main players on Carter's team, but he suffered from several major handicaps. He was a Soviet expert and thus suspect to the détente-at-almost-any-price brigade; his Polish origins only strengthened these suspicions. His position was not strong enough to impose his will on most occasions. Although he had the backing of the President, he still had to establish "coalitions" to get his way. His personality was not such that he could easily ingratiate himself with the makers and unmakers of reputations in Washington and New York. In these circumstances, the most prudent course of action would have been to take the lowest possible profile. If Cyrus Vance thought that a return to the golden days of détente was possible, if others in the Department of State believed that Khomeini was a saintly figure, they should have been given a free hand to try their luck. It is doubtful, in retrospect, whether much more damage would have been done.

Patience and timing are of decisive importance in politics, and in this respect Brzezinski was temperamentally ill equipped; he never provided his antagonists with enough rope to hang themselves—a key tactic, as any bureaucrat can tell you. He felt he had to step in whenever he saw others making mistakes or operating ineffectively. This did not add to his popularity, and often resulted in a stalemate; nor, in the end, did it strengthen his position in the higher councils of the Administration. Reflecting on when things started to go wrong in U.S. foreign relations, Brzezinski wrote in his journal:

> My view is that it was on the day sometime in 1978 when at the S.C.C. meeting I advocated that we send a carrier task force in reaction to the Soviet deployment of the Cubans in Ethiopia. At that meeting not only was I opposed by Vance, but Harold Brown asked why, for what reason, without taking into account that that's a question that should perplex the Soviets rather than us.

But Harold Brown's question was perfectly legitimate. What useful purpose would have been served by the dispatch of a carrier task force? Having correctly sized up the Carter Administration, having reached certain conclusions about how far they could go in challenging American interests, the Russians and Cubans probably would have ignored a few ships.

Brzezinski was, of course, right in assuming that the Carter Administration disregarded elementary facts of power politics in 1977-78 and thereby invited trouble, only to overreact later (the Cu-

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In THE HARDEST DRUG, John Kaplan suggests that there will be more hope of solving society's heroin problem if some of the surrounding myths are demolished. One of these is that we can cure addiction.

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ban brigade). But the problem cannot possibly be explained with reference to one mistaken decision. It was, at least in the first two years, a basic misreading of the world situation. Brzezinski tried to hasten the learning process without conspicuous success and with considerable harm to himself. If toward the end the Carter Administration began to change course, it was because of Soviet and Cuban actions not Brzezinski's persuasive arguments. There was a great deal of good will in the Carter Administration, and most of its intentions were praiseworthy. The well-reasoned pleas of one of its leading figures engage one's sympathies. But they also seem to reinforce one of Bagehot's observations: perhaps the most melancholy of human reflections is that, on the whole, it is a question whether the benevolence of mankind (including its rulers) does more good than harm.

WALTER LAQUEUR

Walter Laqueur is head of the Research Council at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

OF RECIPES AND REVENGE

Heartburn
by Nora Ephron

(Knopf, 179 pp., $11.95)

This is a novel about the eternal triangle—a man, a woman, and the Eastern Airlines Shuttle.

The woman, Rachel Samstat, is Good: bright, witty, brave, and accomplished. We know all this because she tells us so. The man, Mark Feldman, is Bad: deceitful, manipulative, and boring. We also know this because she tells us so, and because her shrink agrees. Mark gets precious little chance to speak for himself, although he is once permitted to charge (in indirect quotes) that Rachel is "a shrew and a bitch and a nag and a kvetch and a grouse." For this or some other reason, Mark is unfaithful even though Rachel is seven months pregnant with their second child. He takes up with Thelma Rice, the wife of a diplomat, who is "not only a giant but a clever giant."

Between Mark and Thelma, alternately uniting and separating them, is the Shuttle, which is in many ways the most important character in the book. You see, Mark and Rachel and all their friends take the Shuttle a lot. That's how we know they are not just unhappy people but unhappy important people—the kind of people who write things in newspapers, appear on talk shows, and pay for their Shuttle tickets with American Express Gold Cards. Mark and Rachel even decide to get married on the Shuttle. It carries them to romance, adventure, tragedy, and the "Today" show.

At the beginning of *Heartburn*, Rachel is pregnant, married, and living at the South (or Bad) end of the Shuttle corridor. Six weeks later, she has been mugged, has had a Caesarean, has thrown a key lime pie in Mark's face, and is living alone at the North (or Good) end of the corridor.

Being Good, Rachel belongs in New York. In New York, moving men read her copy of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. Sensitive police detectives think about going into therapy. And well they might: therapy is great in New York. Take Rachel's shrink (please!). She is beautiful, she has a perfect marriage, and "every so often has to fly off to co-host Merv Griffin." She interrupts her sessions for phone conversations like this: "What's the split on the paperback? . . . What does your agent say? . . . Well, hold out for sixty-forty over two hundred fifty thousand."

That's the kind of therapy Rachel needs, because she is a Big Success in New York. She writes cookbooks: to prove it, fifteen recipes are included (having the undoubtedly unintentional effect of making this book nearly as long as a real novel). She also has her own TV show. She has a lot of things of her own: "I love being able to say things like that," she confides. "My

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producer. My doctor. My accountant. My floor man. My agent. My maid."

Rachel doesn't like Washington. That's because Washington is Bad: a dull hypocritical place where Gentiles and Puritans are "rewarded with the power to force the rest of the country to heel to [their] values." Even the shrinks are lousy. Mark's is a Central American, for God's sake, who furthermore connives at his affair with Thelma: "They were having a double session! At the group rate!!" I ask you!!! Police in Washington aren't in therapy, nossir. In fact, they drink beer on duty. The ultimate proof that Mark is Bad is that he is successful in Washington:

> Mark is a syndicated columnist, that's why I'd seen him on television. He writes about Washington as if it's a city like any other (it's not) filled with rich and interesting characters (it's not).

Rachel writes about Washington as if she understood it. She doesn't. She doesn't understand much, and she explains even less. She assumes we have some prior knowledge—about the characters and about the milieu they live in. So muddy is the narration that we begin to suspect that these events really happened to someone—to actual celebrities about whom we have read in *People* magazine.

Surely that can't be true, the generous critical spirit objects. An intelligent writer like Nora Ephron cannot really have put together an entire (although admittedly tiny) "novel" simply to bring her friends up to date on what's been happening to her. Is there anyone in America who has so many friends that a circular letter to them—not intended for the rest of us—could sell in hardback?

I'm no friend of Nora Ephron's, but I'm no enemy, either. How many reviewers of this book will be able to make that claim? Not wanting to be disagreeable, I tried to come up with a counter-theory—that Rachel is that old standby, the unreliable narrator, and that *Heartburn* is not a tendentious morality play about Bad Husbands and Good Shrinks but a satire on celebrity stupidity.

If Rachel were a satirical figure, what a superb creation she would be! Shallow, snobbish, self-important, provincial, she is the kind of marginal media figure who thinks her old appointment books are World Literature. Further, she is the only real character in the

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A HOUSE IS A HOUSE FOR ME
by Mary Ann Hoberman
Betty Fraser, Illus.
Puffin Books/Viking
(Paperback Picture Books)

Fiction

THE COLOR PURPLE
by Alice Walker
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
(Hardcover)

THE COLLECTED STORIES OF EUDORA WELTY
Harvest/HBJ
(Paperback)

First Novel

THE WOMEN OF BREWSTER PLACE
by Gloria Naylor
The Viking Press

General Nonfiction

CHINA: Alive in the Bitter Sea
by Fox Butterfield
Times Books
(Hardcover)

NATIONAL DEFENSE
by James Fallows
Vintage Books
(Paperback)

History

VOICES OF PROTEST: Huey Long, Father Coughlin and the Great Depression
by Alan Brinkley
Alfred A. Knopf
(Hardcover)

UTOPIAN THOUGHT IN THE WESTERN WORLD
by Frank E. Manuel & Fritzie P. Manuel
Belknap Press of Harvard U. Press
(Paperback)

Original Paperback

THE RED MAGICIAN
by Lisa Goldstein
Timescape/Pocket Books

Poetry

SELECTED POEMS
by Galway Kinnell
Houghton Mifflin
(co-winner)

COUNTRY MUSIC
by Charles Wright
Wesleyan U. Press
(co-winner)

Science

'SUBTLE IS THE LORD...'
The Science and the Life of Albert Einstein
by Abraham Pais
Oxford University Press
(Hardcover)

THE MATHEMATICAL EXPERIENCE
by Philip J. Davis & Reuben Hersh
Houghton Mifflin
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Translation

Baudelaire's LES FLEURS DU MAL
translated by Richard Howard
David R. Godine

Eight awards were also presented in graphics. For further information, contact The American Book Awards, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. 212-689-8920

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book, because she is too involved with herself and her injured Goodness to pay attention even to her allegedly disgusting husband or her allegedly wonderful child ("Clap hands" is the more interesting of the two speeches this phenomenon is permitted).

I'm afraid, though, my alternate reading doesn't hold up. Ephron unwittingly explains her motives in writing this lugubrious Shuttle soap opera, I fear, in the following passage:

> That's the catch about betrayal, of course: that it feels good, that there's something immensely pleasurable about moving from a complicated relationship which involves minor atrocities on both sides to a nice, neat, simple one where one person has done something so horrible and unforgivable that the other person is immediately absolved of all the low-grade sins of sloth, envy, gluttony, avarice and I forget the other three.

It seems to me that a writer who is demanding our admiration should either sell her book by invitation only or else give us something to admire. I found precious little admirable about *Heartburn*—not the cliché-ridden, *Cosmo*-coy writing, not the lifestyle it describes, not the values it embodies. One major characteristic of contemporary pop narcissism, I have noticed, is an insistence on praising oneself for an abundance of precisely those qualities in which one is most lacking. So for me the crowning moment came when, toward the end of this disorderly, vindictive cookbook-memoir, Rachel Samstat praises herself for too much discipline and emotional control.

> I'm writing this later, much later, and it worries me that I've done what I usually do—hidden the anger, covered the pain, pretended it wasn't there for the sake of the story.

Rachel should worry about her writing, but not about that. There's really no problem there.

GARRETT EPPS

Garrett Epps, author of *The Shad Treatment* (Putnam's), is a former staff writer for *The Washington Post Magazine*. He is at work on his second novel.

PURITAN POET

The Life of John Milton
by A. N. Wilson

(Oxford University Press, 278 pp., $19.95)

Literary biography, biographer Leon Edel has modestly admitted, "is a kind of stepchild of literature." Biographies of the greatest writers are apt to seem particularly woebegone, frail orphans alongside the transcendent literary creations of their subjects; to turn from *Paradise Lost* to a justification of John Milton's ways to men is a long fall indeed.

That's not to say the poet lived a prosaic life. Born in 1608, Milton was an outspoken critic of the episcopacy and sympathizer with the Parliamentary cause during the English Civil War. He wrote eloquently vitriolic pamphlets denouncing bishops and championing divorce during the years leading up to the execution of Charles I. In 1649, he became Secretary for Foreign Tongues under Cromwell and proved himself not only a conscientious civil servant but an effective propagandist in defense of Parliament's actions. When Charles II was restored in 1660, Milton was briefly imprisoned and two of his books were burned, but he fortunately escaped the grisly fate of some others devoted to the Good Old Cause—disembowelling and quartering.

Milton's private life was not placid either. His wives, daughters, and eyes all gave him trouble, bringing darkness and loneliness to his middle age. But he was also blessed with a muse, who visited him ever more frequently in his last decade. He rose early and dined lightly, and his inspired labors produced poetry that has left an indelible mark on three hundred years of English literature.

A. N. Wilson, an ardent admirer of Milton, aims to elevate and fortify his brief biography by consulting the poet's art for clues to his life. Milton himself would surely approve of this literary approach, for he had great faith in what texts could tell about their creators: "Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are," he wrote in his *Areopagitica* (1644); "nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them."

THE EXTRACTION Mr. Wilson takes from his swift survey of Milton's prose and poetry, however, may be slightly too pure. According to his reading of that soul, "Milton was an egotist; one of the most supreme egotists who has ever lived." He means no malice by that assessment; such a self-revealing soul is obviously a great advantage to a biographer. Taking pains to emphasize the generous streak in Milton's character as well, Mr. Wilson employs "supreme egotist" as a fond epithet for his subject throughout the book. Milton's prose, which Mr. Wilson ably dissects, certainly is unexpectedly personal, considering the public nature of his pamphlets' subjects. In his *Defensio Secunda* (1654), for example, Milton is distracted from high spiritual and political matters to dwell on the details of his own physique. Described by an opposing polemicist as "a monster, dreadful, ugly, huge, deprived of sight" (pamphleteering was far from genteel sport), the poet hastens to correct the record:

> speak I shall . . . lest anyone think me to be perhaps a dog-headed ape or a rhinoceros. . . . Ugly I have never been thought by anyone, to my knowledge, who has laid eyes on me. . . . I admit that I am not tall, but my stature is closer to the medium than the small . . . although I am past forty, there is scarcely anyone to whom I do not seem younger by about ten years. Nor is it true that either my body or my skin is shrivelled . . .

Yet, as Mr. Wilson acknowledges, egotism does not adequately explain even those most personally inspired of pamphlets, his four tracts in favor of divorce on the grounds of incompatibility. True, Milton's first wife deserted him after only a few weeks of marriage; but the full argument of his divorce pamphlets is less interesting as a reaction to the particulars of his life at that point

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than as an early expression of a fundamental belief underlying all his work: that for true virtue to flourish, liberty must prevail.

Similarly, Mr. Wilson is right to emphasize the personal sources of much of Milton's poetry, from *Lycidas* to the sonnets. But his "supreme ego" theme is less helpful when he turns to the greatest poem, *Paradise Lost* (1667). "It is the least egotistical of his works," Mr. Wilson is constrained to admit—a less than astute comment on the epic. Still, he continues to emphasize Milton's ample ego, and arrives at a disappointingly reductive reading of the poem. Dismissing the Romantic view that Milton's unconscious imaginative energies were working to ally him with the Devil's party, Mr. Wilson argues that it is the "'dark' side of Milton's awareness"—the harsh aspect of that supreme ego—that allies him with the bullying God of his epic. To hate that side of Milton's God, Mr. Wilson believes, is to hate the merciless Milton of the pamphlets, to ignore the fundamentalist strain in his religious views. Mr. Wilson's emphasis on Milton's traditional, austere Christian God is certainly a useful corrective to the now standard Blakean line, and it may well be more biographically illuminating and consistent. But in denying all ambiguity in Milton's imaginative allegiances, Mr. Wilson misses the full "potency of life" in the poem that has proved to be so absolutely *not* a "dead thing," so enduring a masterpiece.

ANN HULBERT

A COMEDY OF BAD MANNERS

The Feud
by Thomas Berger

(Delacorte, 265 pp., $13.95)

Thomas Berger has written thirteen novels, but *The Feud* is the first I have read. It won't be the last. Mr. Berger possesses the defining gift of a major novelist: he creates a unique fictional world that has the same moral dynamics as our world while being flavorsomely idiosyncratic in style, tone, and point of view. Reading him is like looking in a funhouse mirror—it's both comic and creepy. Those clowns in there are possibilities of you.

The first sentence of *The Feud* testifies to Mr. Berger's peculiar genius. It seems straightforwardly denotative, yet it prefigures much that is to come, it establishes mood, and it provides an image for the novel's whole art and action.

> One Saturday morning in the middle of October, Dolf Beeler, a burly, beer-bellied foreman at the plant in Millville, but who lived in the neighboring town of Hornbeck, came over to Bud's Hardware in Millville to buy paint remover and steel wool for the purpose of stripping a supposedly solid-walnut dresser to the wood that underlay the many coats of varnish.

Berger works as fast as fear; by page two Dolf is arguing with Bud's son, Junior, over whether his cigar is apt to ignite the flammable paint remover. In what we later recognize as yet another image for this novel of misperceptions, the cigar is unlit, the danger it represents therefore purely notional. Dolf is explaining this to Bud when Bud's cousin, Reverton, a man who claims to be a railroad cop but isn't, pulls a gun on Dolf and forces him to apologize to Junior. The gun is a harmless starter's pistol, but Dolf doesn't know this. Humiliated, he swears revenge; and so begins the feud between the Beelers and the Bullards.

What follows is a macabre comedy of bad manners in which appearances are disastrously deceptive. When Bud's store burns down the night after the quarrel, for example, we think Dolf did it and so does Reverton. It's not until much later that we discover we're wrong. Next day, when Dolf's car blows up, we think it's the Bullards' work and so does Dolf. But, once again, we're mistaken, Dolf tragically so. Thus do paranoid premises breed paranoid conclusions. *The Feud* is set in the late 1930s, but its moral atmosphere belongs to the cold war.

The web of suspicion and intrigue spun by the feud enfolds Dolf's sons, Tony, an ominously muscular footballer, and Jack, a budding young writer, as well as his daughter Bernice, a wily slut. It coils around Bud's family too, involving his nubile daughter Eva with the Beeler boys and pushing Reverton past eccentricity into the suburbs of madness. All the characters are dangerously prone to treat their feelings like facts. They are ruled by psychological phantasms that, like the feud itself, have only tenuous ties to reality.

Reality is represented here as pretty grim stuff, full of heart attacks and nervous breakdowns, abused children and hints of illegitimacy, sudden violence and constant indignity. One of the characters has a dream of which the author revealingly says that it "gave you the second chance reality rarely allows." The feud, then, is a form of dream, a layer of varnish covering the hard wood underneath. Remove it and the characters are left with the bleak finality hinted at in this glimpse of Dolf at the mill: "Dolf had come here after dropping out of high school, and he had never worked anywhere else." Its rhythm inflects that sentence with poignance. Thomas Berger is an exquisitely subtle artist who can conjure character and emotion from the slightest verbal means. Take this final example. An old janitor comes to sweep up the town jail; not finding the sheriff there, he informs his replacement: "He genly leaves a word for me." That "genly" is not only good comic dialect but also potently suggestive of that man's social fate. It is the literary equivalent of the inspired brushstroke by which a great painter captures the essence of a human soul.

JACK BEATTY

COMING:
Arthur Schlesinger Jr.
on
Gary Hart's
A New Democracy.

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TRB, *from page 4*

tank. With his other hand outstretched, palm up, he'd say, "Well, boys, you're cleaning the glasses in cold water again." For the proper denomination, of course, the commissioner could overlook the infraction.

There is a common assumption about politics that honest practitioners don't get rich. That depends on what you want from politics, power or wealth. If you want power, run for the Senate, and help others make money.

Harry Truman is a good example of what I mean. Truman made it all the way to the top and made no money at it, even though he cut his teeth in Kansas City under Tom Pendergast. When Truman's haberdashery went bust, he was picked up and slated for county judge—the job is actually more like county executive—by the Pendergast machine. Pendergast owned a concrete company and had a passion for public works. As judge, Truman had his hands on the county's construction funds. Together they poured the thickest concrete highways to be found anywhere in America. All done legitimately.

Pendergast also had a bad habit with the horses, which he often paid for by sending his mugs out to shake down the bawdy houses one last time before the betting windows closed. That was a different sort of money, but by the time Tom Pendergast got into trouble for those practices, Harry Truman had already gone to the Senate.

Back to Chicago for a moment. Mayor Washington's first battle with the barons of the city council came when he tried to oust Eddie Vrdolyak from the chairmanship of the City Council Committee on Building and Zoning. That's the committee developers have to deal with when they need an easement or a zoning variance. If they'd rather get it this year than next, they buy their insurance and title searches from the right people and things move along. Richard J. Daley was the only man to be mayor and chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party at the same time. Vrdolyak is still party chairman and retains unofficial control of the building and zoning committee.

By the way, former Alderman Farina's fundraiser will be held May 18 at the Como Inn. Tickets may be purchased through his old ward office, 5933 West Fullerton.

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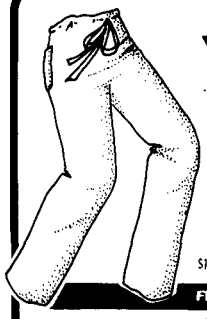

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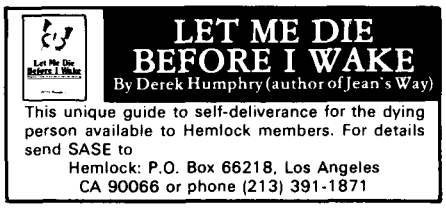
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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Deep Freeze

SO FAR, IT SEEMS, the only thing the nuclear freeze has succeeded in freezing is the nuclear freeze. The House of Representatives was supposed to vote on a resolution endorsing the freeze idea back on March 16. It didn't happen. The vote got postponed until April 13, and then until April 20, and then until April 28, on which day it got postponed again. Maybe it'll finally happen this week. Maybe not. Supporters of the resolution still say it will pass, though they are saying so rather more wanly than they were a few weeks ago. In any case, I for one hope it does pass. I think the freeze is quite a good idea, and the freeze movement is an even better one.

CAREFUL READERS of this magazine may find this odd, since TNR has repeatedly editorialized against the freeze, and your Diarist, after all, is the editor. But we decide these things collegially around here. One doesn't always get one's way. So we had one editorial calling the freeze "a disaster" ("Unfreeze Arms Control," April 14, 1982), and another a year later condemning the idea for having "obvious deficiencies" ("Nuclear Fantasies," April 18, 1983). The House of Representatives has spent more time on the freeze resolution than on any piece of legislation in a decade—forty hours, so far. At TNR we've clocked more hours than that, and judging from what I've read in the *Congressional Record*, the quality of our debate has been higher, too. I guess I've had as much sustained exposure to sophisticated and intelligent anti-freeze arguments as anyone in town. Yet I still can't see anything disastrous about—or even seriously wrong with—the idea of a mutual and verifiable freeze on the production, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles.

THE FREEZE would indeed be a bad idea if the nuclear forces of the United States were significantly inferior to those of the Soviet Union. President Reagan is a great believer in American inferiority. Few serious people agree with him, whatever they think about the freeze. The consensus among those who keep track of these things is that the Russians are "ahead" in some areas and we're "ahead" in others. They've got more and better land-based missiles. We've got more and better submarines and bombers. They've got a quantitative edge in launchers. We've got a quantitative edge in deliverable warheads. It's simply not true that "the Soviet Union enjoys a decided advantage," as Reagan maintains. Overall, we're even. "The United States and the Soviet Union are roughly equal in strategic nuclear power," the Department of Defense blurts out in its Annual Report for fiscal 1982. The theory behind the freeze is that there's no better time to call off the game than when the score is tied. This makes sense.

THE MORE INTELLIGENT opponents of the freeze reject the notion of U.S. nuclear inferiority. Their arguments are subtler, though more marginal. One such argument used to be that a freeze would keep us from building the new missiles we supposedly needed to overcome what TNR, as recently as last month, was still calling "the vulnerability of the American land-based deterrent." The Scowcroft Report has now rendered this argument inoperative; it is no longer respectable to speak of the window of vulnerability. But there are plenty of other arguments. Here are three of them: a freeze would be hard to verify; it would do nothing to stop development of antiaircraft and antisubmarine weapons; it would prevent salutary changes in the superpowers' arsenals, such as Albert Gore's idea of substituting single-warhead missiles for the hydra-headed MIRVs. The first point is not true of testing or deployment, only of production. The second point is true; but it's equally true of any other nuclear arms control proposal, including the President's, or of a regime of no arms control at all. The third point would be true except for the fact that the House freeze resolution explicitly endorses the Gore idea. Anyway, such arguments do not go to the heart of the freeze idea. They strike me as reasons for being critical in one's support of the freeze, not for rejecting it; for saying, "yes, but," not for saying no; for recognizing that a freeze would not solve everything, not for contending that it would solve nothing.

BUT THE FREEZE is not just, or even primarily, a plan; it is a political movement in a political context. Our editorial last month noted correctly that the freeze resolution represents a vote of no confidence in the Reagan approach to arms control; so its defeat, I take it, would be a vote of confidence in that approach. That editorial went on to argue that before we go around saying that any President is not serious about arms control, we should give him "at least a term to demonstrate his ability to reach a strategic arms accord with the Russians." In the meantime, one gathers, Congress and the public should worry about something else. Fortunately American democracy doesn't work that way. And is it really too early to venture a judgment about Reagan and arms control? Here is a man who has opposed every arms control treaty ever negotiated; who has peopled the arms control bureaucracy with popinjays (Rowny), tyros (Adelman), and dedicated opponents of SALT II (Perle, among others); who still denounces that treaty as "fatally flawed"; whose negotiating position, writes Strobe Talbott in an excellent *Time* cover story, not only is "utterly nonnegotiable" but also is "unique in the history of Soviet-American negotiations" in that it "has become increasingly less negotiable as time has gone by." An especially damning sign of Reagan's hostility to arms control was his decision last summer to abandon the comprehensive test ban talks—just as they were on the verge of success. (The Russians had even agreed to on-site inspection, an important breakthrough.) If Reagan means what he says about U.S. inferiority—and there is always the chance that he does—then arms control is out of the question as long as he is President. For arms control requires roughly equal concessions, whereas redressing inferiority requires either that the Russians unilaterally disarm (as Reagan's START proposal envisions), or that the U.S. unilaterally arm (as Reagan's arms budget envisions). So the corollary of Reagan's fantasy of inferiority is a fantasy of unilateralism; and even though Reagan's version of unilateralism is the reverse of the more familiar kind, it's just as unrealistic and probably more dangerous. Hence the freeze, and the freeze movement.

H.H.

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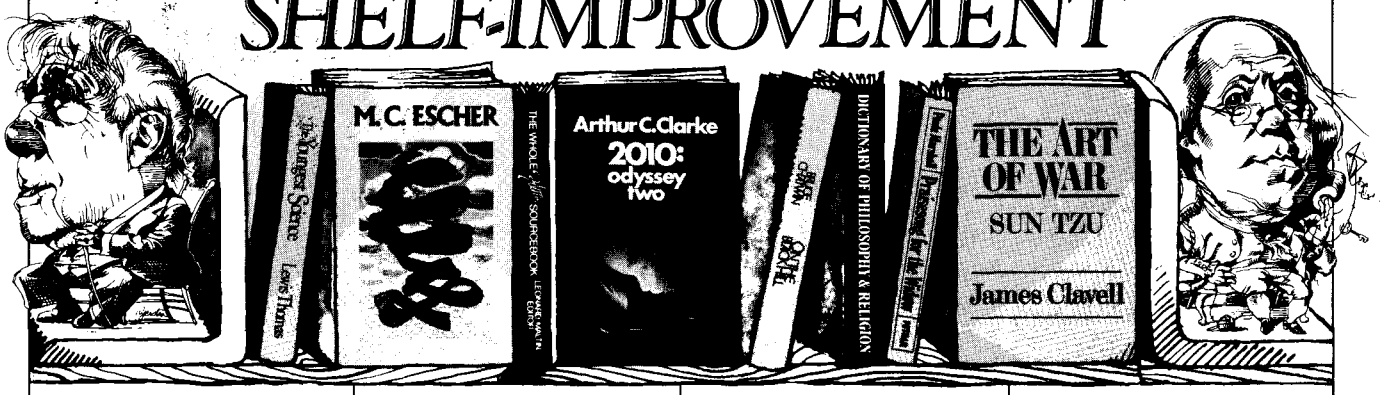

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